

The Brooklyn Paper

Brooklyn's Real Newspaper

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BROOKLYN HEIGHTS-DOWNTOWN EDITION
INCLUDING DUMBO

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TRADER JOE'S IN THE BANK

Cheeky gourmet to open at Court and Atlantic

By Gersh Kuntzman, Ariella Cohen and Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

The deal is done: Trader Joe's is coming to Atlantic Avenue.

The long-rumored arrival of the quirky supermarket was heralded on Thursday morning with a bizarre parade featuring Borough President Markowitz, steel drummers and Downtown boosters — all wearing the retailer's trademark Hawaiian shirts.

"Brooklynites know a great value when they see one — and now our long wait for our own Trader Joe's is over," said Markowitz. "We're thrilled that this acclaimed store is setting up shop. Trader Joe's will bring more customers to Downtown Brooklyn and residents will have even more choice — for fresh produce, prepared foods and groceries."

The store will hawk its chicken dumplings, organic coffees and fresh produce — but not its famous "Two-Back Chuck" wine because of city booze laws — from the landmark Independence Savings Bank building at the corner of Court Street and Atlantic Avenue.

The building, now a Sovereign Bank, is owned by Two Trees Management. The Sovereign branch will relocate across Atlantic Avenue into Two Trees'.



Borough President Markowitz donned a Trader Joe's Hawaiian shirt on Thursday and danced with a calypso band from Borough Hall to the corner of Court Street and Atlantic Avenue, where the quirky gourmet supermarket will soon open its first Brooklyn store.

Court House building.

Trader Joe's arrival was the latest salvo in a war for the borough's upscale stomachs. This week, the environmentally and socially conscious Whole Foods Market announced that its location on Houston Street and the Bowers in Manhattan will now deliver to Brownstone Brooklyn and Williamsburg. (To see a delivery map, check out www.WholeFoodsMarket.com).

The charge for delivery — between 10 am and 6 pm — is \$5.95.

The Whole Foods "Gold Zone" in Brooklyn extends all the way from Williamsburg in the north to the very bottom corner of Park Slope — one block from where local rival Union Market is building its second gourmet emporium. The area includes Brooklyn Heights, Carroll Gardens, Cobble Hill, Boerum Hill, Fort Greene, Clinton Hill and DUMBO.

Curiously red-lined from Whole Foods' delivery map, however, is Red Hook — possibly because that neighborhood's stomach is already sated by Fairway, which opened its first Brooklyn store last May.

That store will get some serious competition next year, when Whole Foods' first Brooklyn store is expected to open along the banks of the mighty Gowanus Canal in the gentrifying area between Park Slope and Carroll Gardens.

Bloomy does Brooklyn

Mayor works here while City Hall gets new rug

By Ariella Cohen
The Brooklyn Paper

City Hall has moved to Brooklyn for two weeks — and Mayor Bloomberg's staffers say they are already thinking better than they!

A renovation of the city's seat of power that forced Hizzoner and 85 staffers to Downtown Brooklyn for a fortnight at the Office of Emergency Management building on Cadman Plaza East has been "kind of a godsend" in the words of one Bloomberg staffer. The city worker — speaking anonymously from an otherwise empty bench in Cadman Plaza Park across the street from his temporary office — described his experience working in the OEM building a stone's throw from trendy DUMBO as a welcome relief from the Gucci Gulch of lower Manhattan.

"I think we all kind of like being in a quieter place with fewer people running around in suits," he said. "It helps me think."

And he isn't the only one feeling that way. Bloomberg's press secretary, Stu Loesser, described Brooklyn as an idyllic village away from the "hustle and bustle" of City Hall.

"We enjoy the same things that generations of Brooklynites enjoy: less crowds and more space," said Loesser, whose name is pronounced "low-ser," not "loser," despite the fact that he lives in Manhattan.

"It's a little easier to hear yourself think."

Loesser said the mayor was enjoying the escape from Manhattan, particularly because he had been able to find a place to eat that reminded him of, well, Manhattan.

"We stepped for breakfast at the Park Plaza diner across the street from the office. It was pretty good, a little like a diner he likes to go to near his house [on the Upper East Side]."

Overall, the borough appeared to agree with the mayor.

"Brooklyn is in the house," he announced.

See **BLOOMY** on page 16

Clones a hit!

Brooklyn's beloved boys of summer, the Brooklyn Cyclones, are off to one of their best starts ever, going 15-6 over their first 21 games. That's way ahead of their pace in 2001, when the team won the New York-Penn League championship. Hot-hitting outfielder Will Vogt (left) has been a key part of the Cyclones offense. Check out our complete coverage on page 12.



Yassky: Stop Ratner gravy train

By Ariella Cohen
The Brooklyn Paper

Bruce Ratner will reap a whopping 50-percent profit on his Atlantic Yards investment, a prominent Brooklyn lawmaker charged this week as he called for an end to the massive taxpayer subsidy of the mega-development.

"Ratner is telling New York City

that they anticipate to make a \$650-million return on a \$1.35-billion investment and that in itself shows that there is absolutely no reason for taxpayers to fund this project," said Councilman David Yassky (D-Brooklyn Heights).

The new charge comes after the release of financial documents that Ratner kept from public view until a lawsuit filed by two Al-

bany legislators wrested them free last month.

The documents reveal the financial inner workings of the 22-acre residential, retail, arena and office project — a combination of some private investment, large tax breaks, \$305 million in direct city and state subsidies (so far), below-market-rate costs for Ratner to acquire state-owned land

and \$1.4 billion in low-interest, tax-exempt federal loans.

Yassky's call for an end to Ratner subsidies comes just two weeks after Mayor Bloomberg — himself a strong supporter of Atlantic Yards — finally broke with Ratner, declaring that the developer "doesn't need" an additional special tax break handed to him

See **GRAVY** on page 16

Paper gets 'Al Qaeda' threat

The Brooklyn Paper

Cops from the 84th Precinct swarmed through the offices of The Brooklyn Paper last week after this newspaper became one of 20 nationwide that received a letter suggesting a plot against the New Jersey-based investment giant, Goldman Sachs.

"Goldman Sachs. Hundreds will die. We are inside. You can't stop us," read the letter, which was written in red ink on lined looseleaf paper.

It was signed "A.Q.U.S.A.," an apparent reference to al Qaeda.

The letter — addressed to the "News Department" of the Downtown News, one of our long-running editions — showed up at our DUMBO office on Friday, June 30. It was opened by Editor Gersh Kuntzman, who didn't think much of the "threat," but did ensure that he was the only staffer who touched what could be a vital piece of evidence in the nation's war on terror.

"All I know about police work, I learned on 'Law & Order,' but I still knew the minute I opened it that there would be cops down here fingerprinting everyone who touched that letter," Kuntzman said. "So I put it aside before anyone else came in contact with it."

"Basically, I took one for the team," Kuntzman quipped. Cops from the 84th Precinct did indeed fingerprint Kuntzman on Sunday — his day off — and slipped the letter into a plastic bag.

The missive was later turned over to the FBI, which is investigating why roughly 20 newspapers around the country, including the Star-Ledger of Newark, received the same letter, all of which were mailed from Queens and The Bronx.

The New York Post — which did not receive the letter — reported that federal law enforcement authorities don't think the threat is serious because of its "non-specific nature." But officially, FBI spokesman James Margolin said that "all threats are taken seriously."

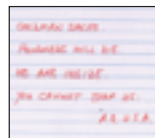
Investigators are looking at fingerprints on the letter and even the saliva on the envelope, which could yield DNA evidence.

"Thankfully, I didn't put the envelope in my mouth," Kuntzman said. "Learned that from 'CSI: New York.'"

"It's a ridiculous letter," he said.

Goldman Sachs' 44-story Jersey City tower is the tallest building in the Garden State and hosts 3,000 employees.

The company itself did not receive the letter.



The letter received at the office of The Brooklyn Paper.

Harold Rogovin, craftsman, 81, repaired Lady Liberty

The Brooklyn Paper

Harold Rogovin, the father of Brooklyn Paper Publisher Ceia Weintraub and a metal-working master who participated in the restoration of the Statue of Liberty and the domes of Ellis Island two decades ago, died Saturday, June 30, in Tampa, Fla., after

suffering a stroke in December. He was 81.

Prior to moving to Florida in 1987, he lived in New York City and Calicut, NJ.

Rogovin was born on March 5, 1926, in the Bronx, the son of Mildred and Leo Rogovin. After graduating from DeWitt Clinton HS in 1943, he served in the

Navy in World War II. Rogovin then attended City College of New York, Brooklyn Polytechnic, and the Craft Students League before starting his own metal-smithing business.

In 1964, Rogovin founded Brass Artisans, where he fabri-

cated reproductions of antique chandeliers and brass beds. At that time, the master metalsmith became most noted for his hand-raised hollowware, including a three-piece coffee service, a variety of bowls and trays, a candelabra, and a spec-

tacular oval-fluted, two-foot-long punch bowl that were all later part of an exhibition at the New Jersey State Museum.

During this period, he was a silversmithing instructor at the Craft Students League, and an adjunct professor at Staten Island Community College. He was also part of the team that restored the Statue of Liberty

and the domes of Ellis Island in the 1980s.

In addition to his daughter, Rogovin is survived by his wife, Katherine, and two other children — Kate Rogovin of Beacon, NY, and Alex Rogovin, of Flemington, NJ — and five grandchildren: Zosia Knuk; Theresa Rogovin; and Paul, Rachel Leah and Sara Weintraub.

Chestnut great, but Koby still my hero

SOME PEOPLE SAY THAT ALL the heroes are gone, but on July 4, I spent 12 minutes getting up on by one of the few people who truly deserve to be identified by the term.

And I'm not talking about Joey Chestnut.

Sure, the kid from San Jose earned the international acclaim he received after his stunning, world-record-setting, 66 hot-dog-and-bun performance at the Nathan's Famous frankfest on Independence Day in Coney Island.

Indeed, there's never been an achievement like Chestnut's in the history of sport, but the hero to whom I was referring was the man, Chestnut beat — six-time, world champ, Takeru Kobayashi.

As always, I had the pleasure of serving as Kobayashi's official judge — the man who dogges spittle, sweat and soggy hot dog buns to keep the champion's crown.

(And can we put to rest one controversy

for a minute? Sure, I'm Kobayashi's judge — and his longtime biographer / confidant / soul mate — but I'm also one of the nation's legendary journalists. My profession's rigid standards of accuracy and objectivity make me the perfect person to count Kobayashi's wins.

There's no "conflict of interest" here. My heart may consider Kobayashi the greatest athlete in human history, but my brain still counts his dogs, one by one, as if he was a green rookie in his first contest.

Now, let's move on.)

This year, of course, Kobayashi entered the contest with a well-documented (though widely disbelieved) case of jaw arthritis, a medical condition that this reporter quickly dubbed "jawthritis."



THE BROOKLYN ANGLE By Gersh Kuntzman

HERO WORSHIP

At the ceremonial weigh-in on July 3, even Mayor Bloomberg stood humbled by the site of this legend of the game — this Japanese Jehosh-

phat — barely able to open his mouth from the pain of his jawthritis.

It was unclear even then whether Kobayashi would even compete.

But compete he did — stunning the world by breaking his own personal record and downing 63 HDBs in the requisite 12 minutes.

I watched him downing dog after dog, but after bun with a precision, grace, speed and athleticism he has never shown before, even with a good jaw. Whenever Chestnut jumped ahead, Kobayashi answered back, putting aside whatever pain he felt to push

the limits of human competition.

Shades of Willie Reed coming off the bench in the 1973 playoffs, Kirk Gibson limping around the bases after winning Game 1 of the 1988 World Series, or Seabiscuit running on at least two lumpy legs.

Afterwards, I spoke to him as only I know how.

"Kobayashi-san," I said. "Did the jawthritis play any role in your loss today?"

But a true champion doesn't play that game. Kobayashi didn't curse his jaw. He credited Chestnut.

"Geez-san," he said. "I must tell you this: Joey Chestnut is a great champion."

He never suggested that his jaw — not Chestnut's — was the difference that day.

And that's why he's a legend. And that's why I refuse to wash my Kobayashi-spittle-covered referee's shirt.

It is my Shroud of Turin.



Former champ Takeru Kobayashi is a mess after falling short by three HDBs.



Exhausted champion Joey Chestnut after downing hot dog number 66.

THE FRANKSTER SPEAKS · CHESTNUT WON'T BE EATING BRAINS: PAGE 14

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WHERE TO GO

EDITORS' PICKS

SATURDAY July 14	SUNDAY July 15	WEDNESDAY July 18	THURSDAY July 19	FRIDAY July 20
Get hooked Take a trip off the mainland tonight at the "Sunset Music Series" aboard the Lehigh Valley Barge in Red Hook. Tonight you can catch the cello-drum combo Take-nobu (pictured) as well as the folksy sounds of Lara Ewan and the Unstrung Orchestra. 8 pm at the Waterfront Museum (at the foot of Co-rover Street in Red Hook). \$9 in advance, \$10 at the door. For information, call (877) 238-5595 or visit www.waterfrontmuseum.org .	Have a ball At today's Bastille Day celebration on Smith Street, Bar Tabac will sponsor the annual petanque tournament where up to 80 teams will compete on 14 courts in the French-style bocce ball. Prizes include tee shirts, trophies and, above all else, glory. Noon on Smith Street between Bergen and Pacific streets. Free. For information, call (718) 852-0328.	See food Lobster always seems to have an astronomical price—a few chunks mixed with mayo and tossed on a hot dog roll can fetch \$25. But on Wednesday nights at Melt, a one-pound Maine lobster is being served for \$14.80 which won't even get you tuna in other restaurants. Stop in before they change their mind. 5 pm on at Melt (440 Bergen St. at Fifth Avenue in Boerum Hill). \$14.80. For information, call (718) 230-5925 or visit www.meltrestaurant.com .	DUMBOLE Tonight the General Store overhauls their normal menu of sandwiches and salads for "Hecho en DUMBO," a "rare sampling of authentic Mexican antojitos," which are small plates of Mexican grub like corn tacos, crabmeat pancakes and tasty soups. We recommend the two-for-one margaritas and a plate of the fresh made guacamole. 7 pm–1 am at the General Store (111 Front St. at Washington Street in DUMBO). For information, call (718) 855-5288 or visit www.hechoendumbo.com .	Hop, skip and a... Nine artists spanning three generations present their work in "Jump!" which is currently up at the Henry Gregg Gallery. These paintings and sculptures display the different styles and processes of the artists and dates observed to jump into the work themselves. 11 am–6 pm at the Henry Gregg Gallery (111 Front St. at Washington Street in DUMBO). For information, call (718) 408-1090 or visit www.henrygregggallery.com .

NINE DAYS IN BROOKLYN

Compiled by Susan Rosenthal Jay

SAT, JULY 14

OUTDOORS AND TOURS
EARLY BIRD WALK: At the Prospect Park Audubon Center 8 am to 10 am. Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue. (718) 287-3400. Free.
CANOE THE LULLWATER: Enjoy a boat tour detailing Prospect Park's aquatic habitat. 10 am, noon or 1:30 pm. Enter at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue. (718) 287-3400. Free.
PEDAL BOATING: Cruise Brooklyn's freshwater lake in a pedal boat. \$15 for one hour, plus \$10 refundable deposit. Noon to 5 pm. Enter Prospect Park near the Petaluma and Ocean Avenue entrance. www.prospectpark.org.
BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN: Escape the heat with "Big City, Big Trees: Gentle Giants of the Urban Landscape" interpretive program. Learn about the garden's tree collection. Guided strolls, special educational workshop and more. \$8, \$4 seniors and students, free for children 12 and under. Noon to 4 pm. 1000 Washington Ave. (718) 623-7200.
BROOKLYN BRIDGE WALK: Big Onion Walking Tours offers a tour across the Brooklyn Bridge and through the city's first suburb focusing on the history, architecture, and people of this unique area. \$15, \$12 seniors, \$10 students. 1 pm. Meet at the southeast corner of Broadway and Chambers Street, at City Hall Park. (212) 439-1090.
AUTHOR READING: Tabia Raza Gallery presents the readings and signing of "I Dreamed My People Where Calling But I Couldn't Find My Way Home" with author Diana Simmons. 2 pm to 5 pm. 224 48th St. between Second and Third avenues. (718) 833-9100. Free.
GREEN-WOOD CEMETERY: Big Onion Walking Tours offers an introduction to the history, architecture and people of Brooklyn's landmarked cemetery. Steps include the graves of DeWitt Clinton, Louis Comfort Tiffany and Leonard Bernstein. \$15, \$12 seniors, \$10 students. 5 pm. Meet at Fifth Avenue and 25th Street. (718) 768-7300.

PERFORMANCE
BARGE MUSIC: Classical music concert presents "A Mutual Admiration Society," featuring works by Haydn and Mozart. \$35, \$30 seniors \$20 students. 8 pm. Fulton Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street at the foot of the Empire Fulton Ferry State Park. (718) 802-6003. Free.
WEEKVILE SUMMER SERIES: "Tina Turner." 4 pm. 1678 Bergen St. between Rochester and Buffalo avenues. www.weekvileseries.org. (718) 756-5250. Free.
CELEBRATE BROOKLYN: 20th annual event presents The Brooklyn Philharmonic with Mark O'Connor and Maya Beiser. Selections include works by Copland, Orff and O'Connor. 8 pm. Prospect Park Bandshell, enter park at Prospect Park West and Ninth Street. (718) 855-7882. Free.
SUNSET MUSIC SERIES: Take-nobu and Lara Ewan and the Unstrung Orchestra play tonight at the Waterfront Museum aboard the Lehigh Valley Barge in Red Hook. 8 pm. Tickets are \$9 in advance, \$10 at the door. For information, call (877) 238-5595.

WINE OVER WATER: Beginning July 19, Thursday nights at Prospect Park will have an adult fair. For \$25, you can sip wine and enjoy snacks! For \$25, you can sip wine and enjoy snacks! For \$25, you can sip wine and enjoy snacks!

CIVIC CALENDAR

TUESDAY, JULY 17
88th Precinct Community Council. Monthly meeting. 85 South Oxford St. between Lafayette and Greene avenues. 7:30 pm. Call (718) 636-6511.
68th Precinct Community Council. Monthly meeting. 333 65th St. between Third and Fourth avenues. 7:30 pm. Call (718) 439-4220.
To list an event in the Civic Calendar, e-mail newsroom@brooklynpaper.com or fax (718) 834-9278.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 18
Canvassy Board 7 public hearing. On the agenda: development of early child-head center at 4201 Avenue and 63rd Street. Board office 4201 Fourth Ave. at 43rd Street. 6:30 pm. Call (718) 854-0003.
To list an event in the Civic Calendar, e-mail newsroom@brooklynpaper.com or fax (718) 834-9278.

THURSDAY, JULY 19
62nd Precinct Community Council. Monthly meeting. 1925 Bath Ave. at Bay 22nd Street. 7 pm. Call (718) 236-2501.
Canvassy Board 7 public hearing. On the agenda: development of early child-head center at 4201 Avenue and 63rd Street. Board office 4201 Fourth Ave. at 43rd Street. 6:30 pm. Call (718) 854-0003.
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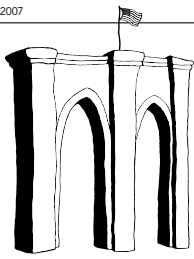
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PARK SLOPE Park Slope Park, Sunset Park Park, Windsor Terrace Park.
NORTH BROOKLYN Gowanus Park, Williamsburg Park, Bushwick Park.
BAY RIDGE Bay Ridge Park, Bayside Park.
KENSINGTON-MIDWOOD Midwood Park, Kensington Park, Ocean Parkway Park.
SOUTHERN AND EASTERN BROOKLYN Brooklyn View (published independently).

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BROOKLYN HEIGHTS-DOWNTOWN DUMBO

Alternate side of street park

The mystery "illegal" parker of Pierpont Street has broken his silence! To me! Exclusively! In my last column, I reported on the controversy surrounding alleged parking permit abuse on Pierpont Street. The problem is so bad along the strip between Henry and Hicks streets that the Brooklyn Heights Association and Community Board 2 have been looking into whether some drivers are misusing their permit parking privileges.

BHA Executive Director Judy Stanton claims that many government employees park with "im-legal" permits on the weekend on Pierpont. As a result, nearly two-dozen BHA members took to the street earlier this year to write down license plates of many of the vehicles in question.

But this week, one of the owners of one of said cars spoke out on the Brooklyn Heights Blog. And the owner, neighborhood attorney and disabled advocate T.K. Small, says he was outraged by the accusations.

"I am one of the individuals who parks with a permit on Pierpont Street in 'flagrant disregard' of the regulations," Small said. "Clearly people do not know what they are talking about! As a New Yorker with a disability, I have had a New York City-issued 'parking permit for people with disabilities' since 1997. The regulations and instructions on the back of the permit are perfectly clear in stating where it is valid."

Small says that the BHA's assertion that positively no one with a permit may park in the Heights' "No Parking" areas is incorrect.

"I don't know what law school they went to," Small said, adding that he resents BHA mem-

HEIGHTS LOWDOWN

Homer Fink

Park or parking? DUMBO decides



A parking area on Pearl Street in DUMBO became a sitting area.

By Chris Cascarano

for The Brooklyn Paper

The once trash-strewn parking lot at Pearl and Water streets in DUMBO has been transformed into what supporters say will become a neighborhood hangout, but others feel it's not worth the valuable parking spaces it is sitting on.

With little fanfare late last month, workers from the Department of Transportation converted the former parking lot into a sitting area with a dozen planters, tables and chairs in just three days.

The reaction was even faster.

"People used to dump syringes and appliances here," said Jamie Walker, an artist whose work

hangs in a neighboring gallery. "Now, it's beautiful."

But that beauty is beholden to different eyes.

"It's a great idea," said Barnaby Furnas, who has lived in DUMBO for nearly two decades, "but the bridge is just too loud for this to be a restful place."

Critics also attacked the plan for eliminating 12 parking spaces in a neighborhood that already has a limited number of spots, but park planners dismissed the criticism, claiming that the lack of parking is a neighborhood issue that is far bigger than just the plaza itself.

"The parking in DUMBO was designed for industry," said Tucker Reed, director of the DUMBO Improvement District. "It all needs to be re-done anyway."

No braking for alleycats

By Rachel Corbett

for The Brooklyn Paper

DUMBO's quaint cobblestone streets will be taken over next Saturday by thrill-seeking bike messengers in a renegade "alleycat" race.

At 2 p.m. 30-100 young men, a few women, fewer helmets and plenty of tattoos will speed away from the starting line near the corner of Plymouth and Washington streets.

City officials rarely intervene since "alleycat" details are kept secret until the day of the race, riders determine their own routes and the unsanctioned events are publicized through fliers, MySpace and word of mouth.

But that could change, if the riders' attitudes are any indication.

"Normally, I'm pretty sane, but when I do this, I go completely nuts," said 26-year-old Miguel Reyes, strategy and win depending on speed, strategy and, most important, fearlessness.

These days, Austin Horse, 25, may be the reigning madman, recently winning the "Rumble Through the Bronx" race.

The DUMBO alleycat is one of Horse's fa-

vorites because of its hills and rugged terrain. Last year, some riders avoided the cobblestone in favor of dodging pedestrians on the sidewalks, but Horse toughed it out: "I got a flat tire right at the beginning, so I rode the whole race on a flat and still won it."

Riders push the boundaries of traffic laws, but local authorities have not done much to challenge the races.

"It's just 50 or so people riding bikes through the neighborhood, I don't really see a problem," said Tucker Reed, executive director of the DUMBO Improvement District.

While messengers' disdain for lane constraints and traffic signals may seem hazardous, riders often insist that they have a sixth sense for timing and, in turn, blame accidents on cabbies and bad drivers.

Reyes said he gave up messengering after having nightmares of being hit by buses. But he still races to get his fix.

"You could lose your life, be paralyzed, mangled or lose a limb," he said. Then he added with a smile: "It's all about how much you're willing to risk."

The DUMBO Alleycat race is on Saturday, July 21. Visit www.ridewithus.com for information.

Center moving next to precinct

By Dana Rubinstein

The Brooklyn Paper

A homeless outreach center — which sparked complaints of drug-addicts shooting up on brownstone stoops and homeless people using vestibules as toilets — is moving to a less-populated street.

The Salvation Army "drop-in center," at 39 Bond St., between Livingston and State streets, Downtown, will move within the next month to Tillary and Gold streets, according to Laura DeBuys, a spokeswoman for the Salvation Army, which operates the center for the city's Department of Homeless Services.

"We have a facility better suited for the program," said DeBuys of the site, which is around the corner from several hundreds of units of luxury condos that are now under construction.

The move away from Bond Street will come as welcome news to residents of nearby State Street, a couple of whom showed up at a recent 84th Precinct Community Council meeting to complain.

"We've had an up-tick in crime on State, between Hoyt and Bond, which most people attribute to the intake center," said John Fischer, a State Street resident.

"One woman found a guy in her entryway shooting up drugs, another found someone using the vestibule as a bathroom. The glassine envelopes are back on the sidewalks. People are using our stoops to do drugs."

The 24-hour drop-in center has been around since 1997, and offers three meals a day, entitlement assistance, reciting individual and group therapy, and job placement services.

DeBuys said she only started hearing complaints recently: "The neighborhood has changed over the years."

Her comments stand in stark contrast to those of another neighbor, Crispin Rover, half of the couple that found the man shooting up in the vestibule. He said the center has been a problem for years.

"The police response is very good," said Rover. "But because of the drop-in center, there's a lot of homeless, mentally ill people. It's gotten much worse over the past three years."

Police said they're aware of the illegal behavior.

"We are there constantly," said Lt. Gary Williams of the 84th Precinct. "We make arrests every week."

Fortunately for cops at the 84th Precinct, the new site for the drop-in center is directly next door to their Gold Street stationhouse.

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Burglary spree hits main St. in DUMBO

I'll be your bridge from where you are to where you want to be

A fashionable DUMBO office building is in the midst of a crime spree featuring a perpetrator who may scout his locations by posing as a harmless salesman.

There have been nine incidents in the building, 45 Main St., between Front and Water streets, said one tenant. The building is owned and operated by David Walentas, the neighborhood's real-estate titan. Walentas's own offices are in the building.

The crime spree was first mentioned on Curbed.com, a real-estate-centric Web site. Police reports analyzed by The Brooklyn Paper revealed key details.

On June 30, two officers were broken into on the 10th floor of the building. In one of the break-ins, a photographer lost nearly \$17,000 in equipment. In the other incident, a law firm was hit, though it is unclear what was taken.

By Chris Cascarano
for The Brooklyn Paper

84th Precinct

A valuable stash of copper cable wire was stolen from the Ikea construction site on Board Street in Red Hook sometime between June 22 and 26, police said.

A construction contractor hired by the company said he left the fenced and guarded building site with the copper wiring cable attached to a large conductor. The 1,800-square-foot line was cut and missing when he returned to the waterfront site the next Tuesday, Police said that the Ikea contractor that reported the heist — J.C. Steel Corporation — was working with the police on an investigation.

This is not the first time thieves have hit the future home of Ikea. In January, 250 tons of construction rubble was allegedly stolen from the site. The dirt on that dirt was never turned up by the police and eventually, the investigation was dropped.

In one instance, a woman in the building confronted the burglar, but he escaped, cops said. Police have not released a description.

In all cases, the holes were made in areas where the thief would not be blocked by furniture, leading police to believe the perpetrator may scout his locations by posing as a harmless salesman.

"People walking into your office to sell things is part of the environment," said Mike Kelly, an employee at Hudson Union a design firm on the 10th floor, where the burglaries happened. "I wouldn't be surprised if the thief uses that cover to see where to break through."

Another worker in the building, Alex Zee, said the building was a security sieve.

Walentas acknowledged that there had been a spate of recent incidents, but told Curbed that "cops have been all over it and have made some arrests."

It is unclear whether people have been arrested or merely questioned — but officers at the 84th Precinct said no one had been charged.

A scammer used up \$1,500 in purchases after a 52-year-old woman left her debit card at a store early June.

The woman had gone to a popular electronics store on Montague Street to purchase a device to help her find a lost remote control — but later could have benefited from a similar device to find her lost card.

She later called the store, where she believed she left the card, but the clerk said it was not there.

Whoever had it promptly went on the \$1,500 shopping spree.

Debit dud

A man in the middle of a verbal dispute with another man on the Fourth of July clearly was willing to take even a bit more tip from his opponent — and promptly took a bite out of the other man's mouth.

The incident went from oral to oral shortly after midnight near the corner of Bond and Livingston streets, though the cause of the initial dispute is unclear.

Several security cameras observed the act, but cops only got a vague description of the man.

Cops say that some thieves steal smokes to use as decoys for vendors who sell untaxed cigarettes.

Chewed out

An elderly woman's caretaker cleaned her out of nearly

Stolen smokes

Cigarettes aren't only bad news for smokers, but they're also bad for drugstore owners, too.

A popular Court Street chain was broken into and robbed of \$400 in cigarettes and cigars on July 3.

The thief broke into the store, which is at Jonckheere Street, at around 10:30 pm by smashing the glass on the front door, said police.

Bar games

A crew of underage criminals sneaked into a popular bar on the corner of Smith and Butler

POLICE BLOTTER

84th Precinct

Ikea hit again

A valuable stash of copper cable wire was stolen from the Ikea construction site on Board Street in Red Hook sometime between June 22 and 26, police said.

88th Precinct

Foiled again?

A 12-year-old boy was mugged by a bully who stole his iPod as he walked home from Fort Greene Park on July 5.

88th Precinct

Robbed

A purse belonging to an employee of a worldwide burger chain was stolen from an employee's bag at the start of her shift at the franchise, which is in the mall at the corner of Flatbush and Atlantic avenues. When she returned to the breakroom at 8:15 pm, it was empty.

Vanishing cash

There are plenty of places to hide big loads of cash — banks, safes, under the mattress — but a man learned on July 6 that the passenger seat of his car is not a good one.

Bar games

A crew of underage criminals sneaked into a popular bar on the corner of Smith and Butler

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Car trouble

It was a bad week for Ford Windstars, as one was stolen and another one was broken into.

In the first case, on July 4, a 34-year-old woman's vehicle was stolen from the corner of Myrtle Avenue and Hall Street.

In the second case, the following day, another Windstar was broken into on Lafayette Avenue and Fulton Street. These thieves didn't steal the car, but made off with a Sony PlayStation Portable and the car's satellite navigation system, worth \$300.

— with Anella Cohen and Harry Cheshire

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Correction

An article about the big changes on Schemerhorn Street ("Schemerhorn rising," June 23) reported that 300 Schemerhorn St. was on the market. Our article erred in stating that the site housed the Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service. The Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service is actually located a few doors down and is not for sale. The Brooklyn Paper regrets the error.

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THE stoop

CARROLL GARDENS-COBBLE HILL BOERUM HILL RED HOOK

Taking a bite out of Smith St

Say goodbye to some gums, and any semblance of sanity on the new Smith Street!

The gods of gentrification have finally given Boerum Hill homeowners exactly what they need for their luxury brownstones / condos / \$2,000-a-month tenements: a luxury toothbrush!

The Radon Scuba brush — now selling for \$10.99 a pop at Smith Organic Market on the corner of Smith and Bergen streets — is a behemoth in the small world of high-end dentifrices. It is known for its extraordinary 6,000 bristle count and a cartoonishly wide head that “flexes back and forth to remind us to reduce the pressure of brushing,” according to the company’s Web site.

BROOKLYN SOUTH



Ariella Cohen

Hot damn! That’s \$11 and a lot of lingo for a basic hygiene tool invented by a guy stuck in jail with a spare chicken bone and some gristle wedged in his teeth.

Such a toothbrush sticks in some craves worse than that bone.

“You could get you 10 pounds of chicken legs or a steak for the price of that toothbrush,” said George Paisanos of Los Paisanos Meat Market, a silver-haired soldier of Smith Street’s old guard.

Of course, Paisanos is not so unshy to modern marketing trends that he didn’t offer an alternative to spending \$11 on a toothbrush. He suggested that the street’s deep-pocketed shoppers spend their \$12 on his trademark Los Paisanos Oven and Grill sauce, instead of the costly cavity fighter.

“You could get two for that price,” he said.

Another veteran proprietor, Tony Gonzalez of Tony’s Hardware, pointed out that a lifetime’s supply of valves could be had for less than the cost of one toothbrush.

“People are strange about the way they spend money,” said Gonzalez. “A guy will come in with a late from Starbucks that cost \$5 and complain that my \$2.99 valve is too expensive. The valve will keep your water flowing for years and the late will be gone in 15 minutes.”

You can find a standard toothbrush in a 99-cent store for, well, 99 cents. So considering that the American Dental Association (notre: “Better living through dentistry”) suggests a new toothbrush every three months, Scuba users will spend around \$40 a year more to keep their teeth clean than the person who can get by with the basic model.

No one is more surprised by the popularity of the \$11 toothbrush than Mohammad Abdullah, co-owner of Smith Organic Market and a Park Slope resident.

“Most people would say [a toothbrush should be] cheaper, but some people love to buy natural,” he said, standing in his green-themed bodega and pointing towards a rack of sweet-smelling “reconstructive” shampoos and complicated face-washes charged with “anti-aging” capabilities.

“It would be wrong to ask them why they are willing to pay more for it,” Abdullah said.

One pearl-necked customer, Cynthia Lane, presented the toothbrush as an indulgence for a goody-goody, like a carab cupcake or a vegan cookie: enjoyable, overpriced and easily rationalized as healthy.

“It seems good for you,” Lane said.

Joey Deborg of Boerum Hill wasn’t afraid to defend his spending habit either.

“I was destitute on my friend’s couch and one day I gave him a 10-dollar bill to pick me up a toothbrush,” Deborg said. “I expected \$8 back, but I ended up having to pay \$2 more and getting [the Scuba]. It feels so good, I never stopped using it.”

That was a year ago.

Deborg, who has moved onto a brother’s couch by now, said that the fancy brush makes him feel rich.

Ariella Cohen is a staff reporter at *The Brooklyn Paper*.

THE KITCHEN SINK

Taps for **Liberty Heights Top Room**: Red Hook’s underground club and brewery has been sold to **Chris Byrne**, frontman of the (slightly overage) rock band Black 47 and owner of Rocky Sullivan Bar, on Lexington Avenue near 28th Street in Manhattan.

On the other hand, a little four-leaf-clover of fortune just hit the **Red Hook Park food vendors**, who will be visited on Saturday, July 14, by celebrity chef Emeril Lagasse of the Food Network show, “Emeril Live.” The space-loving TV chef will be taping a segment of the show at the ballfields between noon and four. The Stoop has learned...

... Ran into our pals from **Sambazon**, the makers of delicious treats from Brazil’s beloved acai (pronounced ah-sah-see) berry, at the Fancy Food and Confection show at the Javits Center this week. They mentioned that the **Red Hook Fairway** is offering such a deal on their sorbet and juices: three pints of sorbet for \$10 or two bottles of juice for \$5. It’s more expensive than Coke, but does a can of the so-called “real thing” have 30 times the anti-oxidants as a glass of red wine? Also at the fair, we discovered that **Steubitz** butcher shop on Court Street is the only place in Brooklyn where you can get those delectable Twin Hen chicken pot pies.

Email Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com



Nora and Mateo Vidal help out at their parents' store, Woods 'n Whiskers, on Summit Street in the Columbia Street Waterfront District. But for how long?

Dogs and costumes and shrubbery — oh, my!

By Ariella Cohen

The Brooklyn Paper

A developer’s plan to build apartments on a gritty block in the Columbia Street Waterfront District has turned into a near-parody of the old saga of builders and their displaced tenants.

In this case, the displaced tenants are the needy, the sick or the homeless, but pampered cats and dogs, fancy costumes, and

lush foliage.

The city is now considering a request from developer LLI Realty to rezone a manufacturing-only block of Summit Street between Van Brunt and Columbia streets, where the Woods 'n Whiskers dog and cat retreat, Gowanus Nursery and a set design company called Composition Shado now thrived.

The developer plans to build a four-story building with 35 units

— some of which would be eligible for tax breaks designed to create below-market-rate housing.

At a public hearing on the rezoning last week at Borough Hall, LLI Realty argued that the zoning change would allow for appropriate residential growth in the newly desirable waterfront neighborhood. But opponents said the block had gone to the dogs years ago — and should stay that way.

Danielle Vidal, the owner of Woods 'n Whiskers said she planned to buy the \$20- to \$45-a-night pet hotel’s brick building and backyard when her lease expires in 2010, but the rezoning would make that purchase impossible.

“We can’t compete against residential developers and their bottomless pockets,” she said.

Vidal said her company has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars fixing up the century-old building — formerly an auto shop and before that, a diner for the longshoremen working across the street at the Red Hook Container Terminal — and equipping the backyard with a colorful doggie slide, a swimming pool and even a peep-ready, salvaged fire hydrant. It may be impossible for the family-owned business to survive if it is forced to move further from its Brownstone Brooklyn customer base, she said.

“This is where we live and where our customers live, but there is nowhere here for us to find another piece of affordable, open space,” Vidal said.

The owner of Gowanus Nursery, Michele Paladino, shares Vidal’s concerns. Her store moved to Summit Street this year, relocating from Third Street near the polluted canal for which it is named after an adjacent business bought the land.

“It is a significant expense to move,” said Paladino. “And we can’t afford to do it each time developers start prospecting.”

A spokesman for Borough President Markowitz said the hope that would take into account the displacement of the three local businesses when he makes his recommendation on the rezoning, which will be submitted to City Planning before a final decision is made.

Vet shooter in peerless show

Callan’s photos to be on display at Sunny’s

The Brooklyn Paper

Our own inescapable shutterbug, Tom Callan, who has been shooting Brooklyn for the better part of three decades, has opened up his files for a retrospective of his work starting next Friday in Red Hook.

Some of our favorite Callan shots — many of which first appeared in *The Brooklyn Paper* — will be on display, lining the walls of the equally irascible Sunny’s Bar on Conover Street.

More than one toast will be raised to Callan at the opening night party at 8 pm.

“Everyone loves Tom because he’s a great photographer and a real straight shooter,” said Brooklyn Paper President Ed Weintraub. “That’s not a pun. He’s a real stand-up guy.”

“Photographs by Tom Callan” opens at Sunny’s Bar (253 Conover St., at Reed Street in Red Hook), July 20, 8 pm. Call (718) 625-9211 for information.



Tom Callan’s famous photo of a New York City firefighter.



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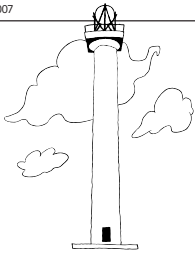
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THE STOOP

FORT GREENE-CLINTON HILL

Thou shalt not make a noise

Lying in the face of one of the commandments of city governance — thou shalt not offend religious institutions — the city is following through on its April promise to crack down on a Clinton Hill church whose members seem to believe that their faith in God allows them to flout city ordinances.

The Department of Buildings confirmed that belief in a higher being does not render one above the law by filing a Criminal Court summons against the Church of Celestial Christ, on Waverly Avenue, between Myrtle and Park avenues.

GREENE ACRES

Dana Rubinstein

Neighbors of the Nigerian Baptist church were pleased. Since moving to their Clinton Avenue brownstone just behind the church in 1999, real-estate broker Doug Bowen and actress Gerri LiBrandi have been battling the church as though their souls — or at least, their sanity — depended on it.

According to the couple and other area residents, the church has had a rather unneighborly practice of hosting all-day, unpermitted, amplified Sunday services in a building zoned for residential use and equipped with little soundproofing. And it's been going on for 15 years.

"They're just terrible neighbors," said Bowen.

But Bowen isn't the only one heartened by the development. The fact that the city is willing to take on a church came as welcome news to Derek Araujo, executive director of the Center for Inquiry, which advocates for church-state separation.

"It's becoming more and more of a problem throughout the country, where you're seeing churches challenging generally applicable ordinances and zoning laws, and seeking religious exemptions," said Araujo.

"It's definitely inappropriate for them to expect special treatment just because they speak for the religious community," he added. "But because of the special treatment, perhaps they've come to expect special treatment."

Araujo has a point. After all, look at the city's move just two years ago to ban parking-meter fees on Sunday — a practice opponents derisively dubbed the "pay to pray" policy.

In reinstating the ban, a near-unanimous City Council overrode Mayor Bloomberg's veto, kowtowed to religious interests, lost an estimated \$12 million in revenue, and upheld the notion that prayerful activity is somehow of greater value than other pursuits.

But perhaps this church's violations of city laws were just too brazen to ignore.

After all, as of April, the owners of the church owed about \$20,000 for violations accrued over the past decade, according to city records.

Ayoola Soetan, who handles community affairs for the church, said he couldn't comment for this article.

But in April, he told The Brooklyn Paper that Bowen's complaints were simply not true. He also called one of his neighbors "obnoxious."

"Whatever information you received is incorrect," he said. "They should accommodate us as we accommodate them. We are there to do our services and we don't disturb anybody."

The highest authority, of course, will be the court.

Dana Rubinstein is a staff reporter at The Brooklyn Paper.

ON OUR OTHER STOOP

PARK SLOPE — North 5th St. line
BOERUM HILL — An \$111,000 house
BAY RIDGE — Baiter's ghost
DUMBO — Pearl's new look
onlineofbrooklynpaper.com

THE KITCHEN SINK

We ran into our Fort Greene pal, Rick Field of Rick's Picks pickles, at the **Fancy Food Show** at the Javits Center this week and he gave us our second scoop in as many years: The company will unveil a new submarine treat, pickled ananaras, in August. Look for Field's "Whip-Asp" in stores near you. Last year, we stunned the world with news that Field would soon introduce Smoked, his delicious smoked kani. ... Our other Fort Greene pal, **Marvin Barksdale**, is determined to attract more yellow cabs to downtown Brooklyn. Thanks to his detailed proposal at a transportation committee meeting, **Community Board 2** will study his demand for a 24-hour yellow cab stand near the Atlantic Terminal mall. Good luck with that, Marvin! ... **The Forte** — Fort Greene's first modern skyscraper — is looking for some retail tenants, but insiders aren't letting on who exactly will fill the ground floor. **Barry Fishbach**, one of the brokers, would only say, "It's an upscale luxury condo building, so we want a retailer that's consistent with the image of the building." ... Our own **Rep. Yvette Clarke** has snubbed Barack Obama and thrown her weight behind Sen. Hillary Clinton's run for the presidency, citing Hill's commitment to "resolving" high unemployment in our inner cities, job creation, reducing poverty, gun violence and increasing affordable housing." EmailStoop@BrooklynPaper.com



Bulbs on a line

Our photographer caught this string of lightbulbs in the backyard of a DeKalb Avenue restaurant.

Hot middle school gets suspension center

By Dana Rubinstein

The Brooklyn Paper

The city announced it will separate a center for suspended students into one of Fort Greene's best-performing middle schools, just days after it bowed to community outrage and quashed a plan to house a similar center in another junior high just a few blocks away.

News of the city's decision reached the principal of the MS 113 performing arts middle school in a June 21 e-mail from the Department of Education, just a week before the close of the school year.

Principal Khalek Kirkland was not pleased. In a strongly worded response, Kirkland wrote, "I have met with my PTA and my community leaders, and we are all opposed to the placement of this suspension site."

"With more students and a suspension site, it will soon become an overpopulated school and undoubtedly fail to provide the necessary environment conducive to learning," continued Kirkland. "Is that the goal — to see [it] become a failing school?"

PTA member James Harris was also outraged, especially in light of recent gang-related attacks on students going to and from school.

"It's absolutely crazy," said Harris. "On May 12, on my son's way home from school, he was attacked by five kids and beaten up. ... I heard the nonsense that the suspended students will be separated from the general school population. What will you do, helicopter them in and out?"

The selective performing arts school, on Adelphi Street between DeKalb and Lafayette avenues, will share space with no more than 80 suspended students, most from within the same school district. The Alternative Learning Center will

have its own principal, guidance counselors and staff. Its students will not mingle with those from the host school, according to the city.

This is the second recent controversy to risk District 13, which includes Fort Greene, Clinton Hill and Bedford-Stuyvesant.

In early June, the city tried to foist a suspension center on IS 265, on Park Avenue, between Cumberland Street and Carlton Avenue. Following an uproar, the city withdrew its plan, though officials said the plan's death was strictly about limited space at IS 265.

But Councilwoman Letitia James (D-Fort Greene) wasn't convinced.

"Lo and behold, within 48 hours [of withdrawing the IS 265 plan], they announced they were going to site it at MS 113," said James. "I recognize the children have to go to school, but the issue is finding a suitable location."

City policy mandates that students who receive a suspension

of between six and 90 days be sent to a suspension center rather than be allowed to stay at home.

Education Department spokeswoman Dina Paul Parks denied that the kids who attend such centers are a danger to the rest of the student body.

"The notion that we're bringing in these completely unruly kids who will create havoc is a mistaken impression," said Paul Parks. "The idea is to give them the instruction they're entitled to legally and morally."

Cops grab cameraman

His lawyer says cops are running wild

By Dana Rubinstein

The Brooklyn Paper

Police arrested a Clinton Hill man on Saturday morning after he tried to use his cellphone to photograph the arrest of a man on Fulton Street, according to the lawyer representing both men.

Roland Albright was sitting outside of a pharmacy on Fulton Street, between St. James Place and Washington Avenue, at around 11 a.m., when an undercover narcotics cop, wearing Muslim head garb, approached him, according to Albright's attorney, Michael Warren.

"The cop said, 'Where can I get some drugs?'" said Warren. "Albright became outraged and said, 'I'm a Muslim. Can't you see? I don't do drugs. Please get away from me.' Then the cop's partners came over and jumped him and beat him down."

The incident might have ended there — but a crowd of people gathered around the cops. Among them was Eddie Santiago, who pulled out his cellphone and tried to photograph the arrest.

"One of the officers saw him and ultimately came over ... and handcuffed and arrested [Santiago]. He was put in an unmarked burgundy van and was taken to the [stationhouse]."

The NYPD confirmed that Santiago was arrested for disorderly conduct, but insisted that Santiago was at fault.

"He was disorderly and causing a racket," said Lt. Pete Martin, a spokesman for the NYPD. "Just

because someone's taking a photo, they don't just get locked up." Martin said that he had no information on the arrest of Albright.

But Warren, the attorney, said the police arrested Albright for resisting arrest and aiding someone in the commission of a crime. In the course of the arrest, Police abused Albright so badly that "Albright could hardly walk," Warren said.

Warren was himself arrested and allegedly assaulted by cops in June after he and his wife tried to intervene as police were arresting a teenager suspected of stealing a car and drug possession.

Councilwoman Letitia James (D-Fort Greene) has called on Police Commissioner Ray Kelly to dismiss the charges against the Warrens and to discipline the cops involved. But NYPD spokesman Paul Browne insisted on Wednesday that Warren was to blame.

"The individual interfered with a separate arrest in progress ... and he resisted when officers attempted to place him under arrest for interfering," Browne said.

"He was issued a desk appearance ticket for obstructing governmental administration, resisting arrest and disorderly conduct. His spouse was given a ticket for disorderly conduct. ... The complainant's allegations against the police have been referred to the Civilian Complaint Review Board."

Warren said his and his clients' arrests don't indicate a trend so much as institutional malfeasance within the NYPD towards "communities of color."

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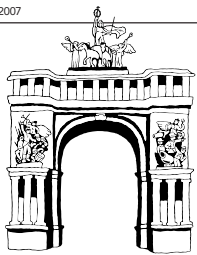
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THE STOOP

PARK SLOPE PROSPECT HEIGHTS, SUNSET PARK WINDSOR TERRACE, KENSINGTON

Plaza must be really 'Grand'

Grand Army Plaza is about to undergo a massive facelift and public reaction couldn't be more, well, um, confused.

As reported in The Brooklyn Paper two weeks ago, the Grand Army Plaza Coalition, a citizens group, wants to calm traffic in the bustling circle by eliminating some roadways, transforming others into two-way streets and giving pedestrians the upper hand over cars.

It's a sensible plan, of course — after all, that traffic circle has long been one of the city's most dangerous intersections and the public hasn't been able to truly experience the majesty of the Civil War memorial and recently restored Bailey Fountain in years — but convincing people of that isn't always so easy. I discovered this when I journeyed to Grand Army Plaza armed with our exclusive schematic of the GAPCO plan from our June 30 front page. First reactions from people — even those who traverse the circle every day — ranged from squinty-eyed confusion to mouth-open stupefaction.

In short, the plan calls for the elimination of the roadway that connects Union Street to Eastern Parkway and the simultaneous transformation of Prospect Park West and the portion of Flatbush Avenue that runs through the circle into two-way streets.

The plan also calls for eliminating a shortcut that allows drivers to exit Prospect Park roadways at Grand Army Plaza and enter the circle.

Naturally, that confused some people. Phil Marriott, a Park Sloper, took a few minutes to really grasp the beauty of the proposal. "A two-way traffic circle?" he said. "I've never such a thing." But after studying all the plans ebbs and flows, Marriott was convinced. "If they eliminate that road between Union Street and Eastern Parkway, it could eliminate the traffic that backs up all the way down Union Street to Seventh Avenue. When I really look at it, it looks like the circle will indeed be safer. It won't be like it is now, like that circle around the Arc de Triomphe with those insane drivers."

Alex Beers, who described himself as "41, with two kids and a minivan, who is always driving through that circle," also balked at the "counter-intuitive" two-way intra-circle traffic. But then, she added, "When you get over the shock, you realize it's kind of beautiful."

It's more than that, says one of its chief backers, transportation activist Aaron Naparstek. Computer simulations done in 1999 show that the redesign would run fluidly. And changing the direction of streets and filling in empty areas with greenery is an inexpensive and simple way of changing the problem, added GAPCO member Robert Witherwax.

The other day, one park user said anything would be better than the less-than-grand Army Plaza. "I had to cross six streets to my kids could play in the fountain," said Jonathan Gold of Kensington, a student at Columbia College in Chicago, is a summer intern at The Brooklyn Paper.

PS... I LOVE YOU

Chris Coscarano



New paint was laid down last week on Ninth Street, providing for a bike lane and left-turn bays. Here, all three types of users follow the new configuration. Alas, it's not perfect: At press time, the city had not removed the old paint yet.

Ninth St makes way for bikes

By Michael McLaughlin

for The Brooklyn Paper

The Department of Transportation kept its word and, almost overnight, added bike lanes to Ninth Street in Park Slope last week.

The lanes for cyclists, which run from Prospect Park West to Third Avenue, were painted on Friday. To make room for them, the DOT eliminated one lane in each direction for vehicles.

Unfortunately, the DOT did not immediately remove the old road markings right away, which created some minor snafus. "I haven't seen any problems, but there's a bit of confusion out there over which lanes to follow," said Craig Hammerman, district manager of Community Board 6.

The street was free of apparent problems on a recent weekday morning and it was no surprise to hear a biker praising the new layout. "I bike down Ninth Street every morning."

said Amy Herrick. "I'm happy about it, because it gives me a lane that's just for me. I hope it encourages more people to bike."

The city is making it easier for bikers to ride on the streets. As part of Mayor Bloomberg's long-term green vision, the city will paint 1,200 new miles of bike lanes, up from just 400 miles currently.

But drivers were not impressed. The bicycle trails on Ninth Street mean that people in cars are now confined to one lane on each side of the street.

"The two lanes was a much better flow of traffic," quipped Eric Daly. Daly's complaint might mean things are going according to plan. One of the Department of Transportation's stated goals in adding the bike lane was also to reduce auto speeds on the lightly used roadway. There were 274 crashes along Ninth Street between 2004 and 2006.

One driver appreciated the safety that

comes from separating the two-wheelers from the four-wheelers.

"That buffer of an extra couple of feet is nice," he said. But the bike lanes might have unintended consequences for people making deliveries. "I hate them, because I get tickets for double parking in the bike lanes," said Orlando, who drives a Pepsi truck.

Orlando's attitude holds greater sway west of Sixth Avenue, where Ninth Street becomes far more commercial than it is near Prospect Park. This week, many delivery trucks blocked the bike lane, just as they did before the lane was painted.

The situation provided a flashback to the controversy that resulted after the DOT announced the bike lane plan this spring. The proposal sparked an unexpectedly heated debate in CB6, which eventually endorsed the plan by a narrow majority in May after several contentious meetings.

'Block' busted building is on sale

By Matt Hampton

for The Brooklyn Paper

A Dean Street house, site of a bizarre attempt to seal in a family that was living inside, is on the market.

The building at 499 Dean St., in Prospect Heights, made headlines last September, when then-owner Marc Scheiner started demolishing even though the Barreto family was still inside.

As reported in The Brooklyn Paper, the family awoke one morning to discover construction crews cinder-blocking every window in the building, with the exception of theirs, in an attempt to force out the family.

Those cinder blocks were finally removed this spring. The building itself is still in shambles from the attempted demolition, however, which explains why Massy Knalke Realty Services is marketing the \$2-million building as a unique five-year-old close to where the mostly luxury Atlantic Yards development is slated to rise.

Experts said the building's value would soar if Atlantic Yards is built, though neither the building's current owner nor the real estate broker handling the account returned calls from The Brooklyn Paper.

An employee at the real estate office did confirm that the listing existed. The gentrification that created the building's \$2-million price-tag ensured the Barretos, who live in Apartment 2L, last year.

For years, they claimed that Scheiner denied them heat and hot water, and threatened them with illegal rent hikes.

But the Barretos outlasted Scheiner, who sold the building after the "cinder-blocking incident," said the Barretos' lawyer, Jennifer Levy of South Brooklyn Legal Services.

Now, the Barretos are in discussions about being relocated while the current owner renovates the building top to bottom. At that point, they'll return to a ground-floor apartment — with their rent-stabilized status intact.

For now, they still live in the building, although the other units are just shells, replete with missing sheetrock, plumbing and other necessities.



The building at 499 Dean St., bricked over in September (right) is for sale (current view, left).

ON OUR OTHER

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THE KITCHEN SINK

Our own Rep. **Yvette Clarke** has snubbed Barack Obama and thrown her weight behind Sen. Hillary Clinton's run for the presidency, citing Hill's commitment to "resolving high unemployment in our inner cities, job creation, reducing poverty, gun violence and increasing affordable housing." ... You gotta love **Urban Optical** on Seventh Avenue. Our editor went in there with a broken frame and the technician fixed it for free — even after the boss pulled out his wallet and prepared to pay. ... A new restaurant, **Sidcar**, on Fifth Avenue between 5th and 16th streets, just opened, serving "contemporary American fare." It's applying for a liquor license, so for now, the booze-friendly policy is BYOB. ... Skopos were coming out in force for a fundraiser for **Pizza Plus** at **Southpaw** on Friday night. The popular Seventh Avenue pizzeria was gutted in a fire in May. ... Our pals at **New York Methodist Hospital** have been real busy. First, they unveiled a new Department of Neurosciences, combining neuroscience, rehab and psychiatry into one discipline, calling the decision to merge the three fields a "no-brainer" (pun intended?). Later, the hospital announced an "insomnia clinic," where patients will hopefully be able to find rest. ... Our pal, and contributor, **Chris Varmus**, is pumped up for kickball, and wants more people to discover their inner children. He's got 50 red rubber ball enthusiasts signed up for his "Empire Division" league in **Prospect Park**, and needs just 10 more to enlist on kickball.com. ... Our pal **Hollie Rosenberg**, best known as the stage manager for the beloved 2005 Fringe Fest hit, "SUV: The Musical," is now directing "Richard III" at the **Brooklyn Lyceum** on Fourth Avenue. The show has remaining performances at 8 pm on July 23 and 30, and August 6, 13 and 20. Check out www.brooklynlyceum.com for details, but Hollie assures us that her "Dick 3" kicks butt!

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Yankee fan thief loses to fast-thinking teller

By Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

A Yankee-loving bank robber was foiled by a fast-thinking teller who called cops after tricking the villain into believing she had gone into a back room to get some cash.

By the time cops arrived, however, the perp had fled empty-handed from a branch, which is part of the Pathmark Shopping Center on 12th Street near the Gowanus Canal.

The incident began at noon on July 3, when a man wearing a classic blue Yankee cap entered the bank and slipped the teller a note that read, "This is a robbery. Do not panic. I have a gun. I will use it. Empty your drawer [and] remain calm until I leave. 100s, 50s and 20s only."

The teller, whose name is being withheld by The Brooklyn Paper, told the perp, "Give me a minute. I have to get my keys," and then slipped into a back room with her manager, where the pair called 911 and activated the bank's silent alarm.

Cops did not have a good description of the Yankee fan thief. **Just said no**

A 30-year-old woman survived a scare with her life intact and her cellphone still in her possession after two perps surrounded her on St. Marks Place on July 3.

The woman told cops that the two men approached her as she neared the corner of Fifth Avenue at around 12:30 a.m. One of the men pulled out a paper-covered object and said,

"Give me your cellphone or I'll kill you!" while the other man approached from the rear.

But when the woman refused, the two would-be assailants fled.

Punch out

A teenager had his fancy cellphone stolen from him after an older man punched him in the face on Prospect Park West on July 2.

The teen told cops that he was walking near 11th Street when the man came over, slugged him and then fled with the Sidekick phone.

The boy lives on 10th Street.

POLICE BLOTTER

Big swipe

A perp grabbed a woman's pocketbook as she waited for a bus at Grand Army Plaza on July 3 — and walked off with more than a grand in cash.

The 28-year-old woman had been waiting for the bus at the northern end of the awkward traffic circle when the thief approached from behind.

The purse contained \$1,030, plus a cellphone and a 30-day

MetroCard. The victim never got a good look at the criminal.

Tattoo youth

A pair of perps — one sporting a racy tattoo — made off with thousands in cash and electronics in a brazen midday robbery at a popular Flatbush Avenue pool hall on July 5.

An 18-year-old woman who works at the billiard parlor, which is near Seventh Avenue, said she put her handbag be-

hind the counter at the start of her shift at around 2:30 p.m., but it was missing when she returned.

When she asked around, a co-worker told her that he had seen a woman leave the pool hall with the bag. He described her as a white Hispanic woman with a tattoo of a teardrop woman on her right arm.

She and her male accomplice sped away in a Mercedes, the witness said.

Later, when the 32-year-old checked his own belongings, he discovered that his \$4,000 laptop had also been taken.

Glass bash

Try not to leave your valuables in your car.

At least two people were reminded of this safety precaution last week in separate incidents involving cars, broken glass, and lost property.

In the first incident, a 38-year-old woman had parked her car in Grand Army Plaza at around 5:50 p.m. on July 4. When she returned to the car minutes later, she found the window smashed and her wallet missing.

She lost just \$30 — a far-less-expensive lesson than the one learned by a 32-year-old man who had parked his car on Flatbush Avenue near the Prospect Park Zoo at 1:40 p.m. on July 8.

When he returned two hours later, he saw the broken glass and soon discovered that his laptop computer was missing.

Very unsweet

A popular Ninth Street bakery was robbed of a computer and a cellphone on July 6.

The perp entered the Paris-style bakery at around 2 p.m. — just when all the employees happened to be in the basement.

He grabbed a laptop and a phone and left the bakery, which is between Fifth and Sixth avenues, before anyone got a good look at him.

Good collars

Two perps were nabbed — one with his victim's cash still in his front pocket — minutes after mugging a man on the corner of Eighth Avenue and Second Street on July 8.

The robbery occurred at just midnight. The two men had approached their victim and, after coyly asking for directions, started punching the older man.

One of the men screamed, "Give me your money," and the 32-year-old victim handed over \$355.

Cops flooded the zone and quickly arrested two men — a 21-year-old and a 19-year-old. The older perp, described as a menacing 6-foot-4 and 230 pounds, still had the cash in his pocket. He was hit with robbery, larceny, assault and harassment charges.

His partner in crime, whom police described as an even more menacing 6-foot-4, 250-pound teen, was charged with robbery, assault and harassment.

No cash swipe

A retired letter carrier had his pocket picked, but he got the last laugh over the thief: There was no money in the wallet that got lifted.

The man, who lives on Sixth Street, told cops he had gotten off a Manhattan-bound R train at the Fourth Avenue station in Park Slope at around 4 p.m. on July 6 and noticed that his wallet was missing.

That's when he remembered being jostled as the train neared the 25th Street station. He couldn't give cops a good description of the bumpers, but said there was nothing in the wallet except a Social Security card and his postal pension card.

TV taken

A perp snatched his way into a Prospect Park West apartment during the owner's month-long vacation and walked off with a \$900 TV set.

The crime was reported on July 8, but the owner said it could have happened any time after June 13.

In the interim, an unknown criminal pried open a metal gate on a first-floor window and let himself into the building, which is at 13th street.

He took the 24-inch Sony TV and left.

Wheely weird

An old Dodge was stolen from a spot on Dean Street on July 1, cops said.

The 60-year-old owner had parked the 1992 Spirit — valued at all of \$700 — between Fourth and Fifth avenues at around 3 p.m. When he returned around noon the next day, the old wheels were gone.

In an unrelated, though equally bizarre, crime, a Third Street man told cops that thieves tried to steal his 1988 Pontiac — and even moved it from a spot on Sixth Avenue onto his street — on June 29.

The perps damaged the steering wheel too, cops said.

Park 'rapist' admits to sex, but says it was consensual

By Chris Cascarano
for The Brooklyn Paper

The former Trinidadian Olympic arrested last week and charged with raping two women in Prospect Park in June has admitted that he had sex with his victims, but claims the encounters were consensual, prosecutors said this week.

Alvin Henry, who competed for the island nation at the 2000 Games in Sydney, was nabbed on July 1 after what police say was a five-rape spree that dates back to 2003, when he allegedly raped two women in Queens.

Henry returned to his native country Trinidad for four years, but came back

sometime this year, cops said, and sexually assaulted a 15-year-old in Prospect Park near Grand Army Plaza on June 11.

The girl, pretending the encounter was consensual, ended up getting Henry's cellphone number — a move that began a chain of events that led to Henry's capture.

Four days after the June 11 attack, and with cops getting closer, Henry struck again, police say, raping a woman who had parked on a quiet Prospect Park roadway with her boyfriend, an off-duty police officer.

While the couple was otherwise distracted, Henry approached with a gun, cops said. The couple became separated, and Henry raped the 38-year-old woman, police said.

Even as the tabloids were screaming about the "Lover's Lane Rapist," the cops were ready to spring their trap. Calling the number that the prior victim had given them, they lured Henry to an area of the park near Ocean and Parkside avenues.

The 15-year-old made a positive ID and Henry was arrested. DNA samples from the two Prospect Park victims connected the same rapist to all the crimes, police said.

Prosecutors said that Henry's statement that he had consensual sex connects him to the rapes.

He is being held without bail and is undergoing psychiatric evaluation before his next court date on July 24.

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Wheels gone

At least two other cars were stolen off Park Slope streets last week.

A 2002 Subaru Outback was stolen from a spot on Carroll Street sometime between June 30 and July 4, and a 2000 Honda Civic was swiped from its spot on Eighth Street on July 5.

In the first case, the owner told cops that she had parked the car between Seventh and Eighth avenues.

In the second, the owner said he'd parked between Sixth and Seventh avenues.

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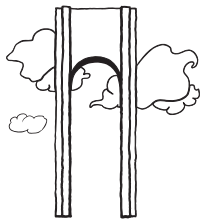
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THE STOOP

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Is Kohen now Ridge Ratner?

Developer Andrew Kohen wants to build a new Home Depot and hundreds of units of housing along a vacant Bay Ridge railroad, but faced an Atlantic Yards-sized backlash from local preservationists and Community Board 10.

In fact, Bruce Ratner's taxpayer-rewritten antics have inspired an uprising by community boards against developers. Locals fear that Kohen's ambitions are too large for the surrounding area's infrastructure and that the developer is more concerned about his wallet than the interests of the community (sound familiar?).

Of course, Kohen isn't Bruce Ratner and Home Depot isn't Atlantic Yards. In fact, in many ways Kohen is the anti-Ratner: he is accessible (he even speaks to reporters), has a proven track record of keeping his word (at least according to CB10), and isn't looking to boot anyone out of his house or have the state seize private property and turn it over to him.

But that hasn't stopped the Ratner cloud from blowing over Kohen's proposal.

The cynicism of local officials towards developers has hit a new high (which is really saying something in Brooklyn).

Board member — and failed congressional candidate — Steve Harrison even accused Kohen of greed at CB10's land-use committee meeting last month.

Harrison and others have seized on one aspect of Kohen's project to deride it as Atlantic Yards-ine: Kohen needs a zoning change before he can build residential units on the commercial land of the railroad at 62nd Street and Eighth Avenue. The resulting complex would consist of an 11-story building with 216 apartments (43 of which will be below-market-rate), office space, and the 100,000-square-foot Home Depot.

CB10 members chewed him out — but mostly because they could, unlike the three boards around the Yards site, which never got to quit Ratner directly because his project is sponsored by the state and, thus, has no one to sue.

When members finished their anti-development sermons, ranging on everything from the height of Kohen's buildings to the state's carbon footprint, they privately said that the real problems can be boiled down to two things: trust and accountability.

"[Like we're learning with Ratner], we know what Kohen is telling us and what actually happens could be two different stories," one member said. "These projects have a way of spiraling out of control."

No one could blame local officials for being a little gun-shy to greenlight Kohen after details keep emerging about that other developer's development in that other part of Brooklyn.

Despite Ratner's promises to the contrary, it becomes increasingly clear that taxpayers are actually footing the bill for his "privately built project," and local officials who approved of the deal are learning they have no way of holding Ratner accountable now that they've approved the project.

So it's no wonder that other communities are now asking a lot more questions.

But Kohen has an answer for them. "This is not an extension of Atlantic Yards, and those who may take that view are sadly mistaken," he said. "Unlike Atlantic Yards, there is no vehement opposition to this project, and in fact, there is very strong community support."

Late Wednesday night, CB10 actually surprised me by approving Kohen's rezoning request (see page 4), but the board did so on the hard questions. So I guess we can thank Bruce Ratner for one thing: the current climate of developer distrust could at least force developers to start giving answers if they want local support.

THE KITCHEN SINK

AI Gore is coming to Bay Ridge, or at least his movie "An Inconvenient Truth" is. Gore's cinematic war against carbon dioxide will unspool on July 12 as part of the **Narrows Botanical Gardens** free Summer Cinema Series. Bring a hemp blanket and some organic snacks. ... **Little Cupcake Bakeshop** at 9102 Third Ave. has a great red velvet cupcake, but if you order a piece of Oreos cookie cake, be prepared to knock your waiwaka — the slice sizes are absolutely monstrous! ... **State Sen. Marty Golden** (R-Bay Ridge) may be limping into the Mayor's race. Our source tells us the bunn knew that he hurt a few years ago on an elliptical machine has been giving him problems again. That sure didn't stop him from shaking every hand and kissing every baby at last week's **Independence Day Parade** on Third Avenue. ... A country-club Democrat? **Councilman Vince Gentile** (D-Bay Ridge) recently got funding for some new tennis courts and free tennis lessons in the PS 229 schoolyard. The program runs from July 2-Aug. 24. For information, contact Gentile's office at (718) 748-5200. ... **The Bay Ridge Hum** is back! The Stoop is getting reports that the hum that keeps residents along Shore Road awake on some summer nights, is back and as annoying as ever. Many believe it's the mating call of the **Oyster Toadfish**, so if you're interested in a little frog action, head to the waterfront. Email Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com

YELLOW HOOKER

Matthew Lysiak

Cell tower war off the hook

By Matthew Lysiak
The Brooklyn Paper

It's getting ugly on 81st Street, where tenants of an apartment building — furious over the installation of cell-phone equipment on their roof — confronted workers and nearly came to blows with their landlord's relative after construction crews began installing more phone machinery.

The trouble began several years ago, when the owner of 301 81st St., Gus Sideratos, installed several antennas atop the building. Then, last Friday, residents of the radio active complex, awoke to find their street blocked off for the second time in two weeks so a crane could hoist even more equipment to the roof.

Residents of the block swarmed around the workers, prompting a relative of Sideratos to get into "a really heated and nasty argument with a resident senior citizen" outside of the complex, said one witness.

There was yelling and cursing and even threatening as the young man accused the senior of starting all the protests and making the petitions, said one source who lives within the building and requested anonymity out of fear of landlord retribution.

The confrontation didn't sit well with other tenants and neighbors, who are already at a breaking point over the lack of community say over the installation of equipment they believe to be unhealthy.

"There are obviously multiple issues here, including reported intimidation by the landlord and his cronies, traffic disruptions, and a lack of leadership by local officials," said Joe Jordan. "Let's not forget about the possibility of adverse health issues related to the non-stop and involuntary bombardment of these telecom signals."

Tenants filed complaints



Cellular phone antennae top this building at 301 81st St.

with the Department of Building and even threatening as the young man accused the senior of starting all the protests and making the petitions, said one source who lives within the building and requested anonymity out of fear of landlord retribution.

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Tenants filed complaints

stallation of a Sprint/Nextel tower atop a nearby building. As on 81st Street, school parents didn't know that the tower was coming until a crane showed up late one night.

Parents were able to garner enough negative publicity — and political support — to force Sprint to change plans. Councilman Vince Gentile (D-Bay Ridge) is again in the fray, backing the 81st Street residents.

Gentile wants governments to have a say in the placement and number of cellphone towers in their communities.

"The situation on 81st Street is a perfect example of why Congress should amend the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and give the people who know what's best for their local communities the ability to regulate cell phone towers," Gentile said.

The councilman also called for a study of health issues related to cellular equipment. Though there is little data to support the claim that cellphone radiation is harmful, most residents are afraid.

"I have heard that these towers can cause cancer, and that is what a lot of people are concerned about," said Ernie Homsey, a resident of the 81st Street building since 1945. "How can they do this when their have been no long-term studies to assure us they aren't harmful?"

Reps for cell phone companies have insisted that the signals are harmless, and assert that not one reputable study has shown adverse health effects. But that didn't fully satisfy Homsey. "When you have people who feel their family's health is being jeopardized and no one will listen, they begin to feel desperate," he said.

ON OUR OTHER PAGES

- PARK SLOPE** → North St. Site Sale
- BOERUM HILL** An \$11 toothbrush
- BAY RIDGE** Ratner's phone
- FORT GREENE** Activist arrested

online at BrooklynPaper.com

Slowing down Dahlgren Place

By Matthew Lysiak
The Brooklyn Paper

Residents of Dahlgren Place won a small victory last month when the city agreed to finally install a speed limit sign on the fast-moving street.

The signs are necessary because drivers often exit the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge without adjusting their speed to the slower pace of the residential street, said Councilman Vince Gentile (D-Bay Ridge), who had requested the speed limit sign at 72nd Street.

"Cars come off the bridge at 40 to 50 miles per hour — and since there aren't no speed signs or lights on Dahlgren



Cars and trucks come flying off the Verrazano bridge exit ramp and right onto Dahlgren Place in Bay Ridge.

Place, they just continue at their speed," said Gentile. "The sign should remind drivers they are not on the bridge anymore."

The city speed limit — whether posted or not — is 30 miles per hour. One resident of Dahlgren Place wishes the speed limit sign would post an even lower number.

"That [the sign] is good news," said the woman. "But I suggest they make it even slower. After all, this is a neighborhood."

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Thief steals time from old lady

By Matthew Lysiak
and Michael Giardina
The Brooklyn Paper

68th Precinct

This lady really lost time. A 72-year-old woman returned to her 87th Street home on July 6 to discover her front door broken and more than \$7,500 in valuable watches—including a \$5,100 Rolex—missing.

The woman had returned to her home, which is near Sixth Avenue, at 3:45 pm after a short stroll.

Police said that no neighbors reported hearing or seeing anything out of the ordinary. But one cop said an arrest is only a matter of time.

Such friends

An 84-year woman was a victim of identity theft—by one of her daughter's friends.

The woman, who lives on 83rd Street near Fifth Avenue, told cops that a friend of her daughter opened up several credit card accounts in her name, and made \$491 in purchases before the elderly woman became aware of the fraud on July 7.

The inside job was easy work for the opportunistic 44-year-old perp, since her father used to do financial work for the lady and had still access to her personal information.

Cops have identified the fal-

er and have issued a warrant for her arrest.

Apartment rob

A Shore Road apartment was robbed while its resident was off doing errands on July 6. The thief went down at around 6 pm. When the 48-year-old victim returned after an hour walk, he found that his front door was open and his flat, which is near 72nd Street, had been ransacked.

Double booty

A pair of purse snatchings in as many days both involving a gray SUV, cops said.

The first theft went down on July 4, shortly after 9 pm, when a 26-year-old woman was walking along Shore Road near 92nd Street. A gray SUV pulled up beside her, and an unknown man jumped out of the car, grabbed her purse, jumped back in the gray SUV, and sped off.

Fortunately, the inconvenient truth for this perp was that the woman was only carrying \$17.

The second victim wasn't as lucky.

Two days later, a 25-year-old victim was walking on 10th Avenue near 63rd Street at 8:11 pm, when a gray SUV stopped next to her. This time, the man showed her a gun before demanding her purse. The woman quickly handed over the purse and the driver fled.

The SUV-driving bandit made off with a cellphone, valued at \$400, an iPod and \$180.

POLICE BLOTTER

62nd Precinct

Break-in

A man returned to his West Sixth Street home on July 3 only to discover thugs had robbed cash and jewelry after he had left a side kitchen sliding door unlocked.

The 53-year-old man came back to his home, which is near Avenue P, at around 2:30 pm. Within the three-hour span of when his wife left for work and when he came home, criminals managed to take \$300, along with his family's priceless jewelry, police said.

AM attack

A 22-year-old woman was robbed by two thugs who pushed and shoved her on July 3.

The woman was walking home on Stillwell Avenue, near 25th Avenue, at around 3 am when the thugs approached her. They shoved her into a telephone pole and snatched her purse, which contained \$70, along with her credit and debit cards, police said.

After the attack, the tag team fled down 84th Street.

Nuisance

A 66-year-old had her purse robbed at gunpoint in the lobby of her Bay 38th Street building

by the very same thug she held the door for just minutes before on July 4.

The terrifying incident began at 1 pm, when the victim went to check her mail within the building, which is near Crosey Avenue. The thug rushed her from behind and attempted to take her pocketbook. When she resisted, he pulled out his silver pistol and told her, "Give me the bag and don't follow me out. I will shoot you."

The victim gave him the purse, which contained \$90, along with her credit and debit cards, police said.

Holiday rob

A Bensonhurst man returned to his Bay 35th Street apartment and found thugs had ransacked his bedroom and taken his hard-earned cash on July 4.

The victim returned to his apartment, which is near Benson Avenue, at around 4:30 pm. The thugs had rummaged through his things, taking \$6,000, along with a new Samsung TV, police said.

Teen bust

A teen who had his bicycle and his cellphone robbed on July 6 helped police catch three of the four thugs who attacked him.

The victim was biking on Bay Parkway near 80th Street at around 11:15 pm when the perps approached him and pushed him off the bike. Next, two of the thugs rummaged through his pockets, taking his cellphone.

But the attack didn't end there. After taking his property, all four proceeded to punch and kick the teen as he lay on the pavement, police said.

Fortunately, two witnesses saw the whole thing, helped him chase down the punks, and then held them until police showed up.

Bank rob

A bank robber knocked off a New Utrecht Avenue branch for \$2,516 at around 5:30 pm on July 6, police said.

The perp came into the bank, which is near 71st Street, and passed a note to the cashier. "Give me your money. I have a gun. You have 3 seconds."

The teller complied with the robber, giving him the money along with a new blue friend, a dye pack that explodes after a few seconds.

Cops locked down all the subway stations in the vicinity of the bank, but they came up empty, allowing the thug a clean (minus the paint) getaway.

Car store swipe

An 18th Avenue auto store owner had his wallet stolen

right out of an onsite toolbox on July 1.

The 55-year-old owner of the store, which is near 86th Street, noticed the break in at around 4 pm, when he went looking for his wallet. The thief got away with \$110, including debit and credit cards, police said.

Teen turmoil

A 14-year-old had his cellphone stolen after two thugs attacked and robbed him in front of a Bay Parkway grocery store on June 29.

The victim was in front of the store, which is near Bay Ridge Avenue, at around 1:15 am when the criminals approached the teenager. Without any warning, the two punks started to throw milk crates at the victim and then swiped his phone, police said.

The perps fled with the portable phone in hand.

Forgiveness?

A woman had her car stolen right in front of her very eyes when a punk used a traffic accident as cover for him to swipe the wheels on June 29.

The woman was driving on 15th Avenue and 77th Street at around 9:30 am when a punk plowed into her car from behind with, cops said. After the two exited their vehicles to discuss the situation, the thug proceeded to jump into the woman's silver Hyundai, and sped off towards New Utrecht

Avenue, police said.

The victim was unable to identify the punk in a police lineup. Cops are hunting for the car, which has the New York plate number BAW9517.

Sleeping beauty

A woman asleep in her 78th Street apartment received the wake-up call of a lifetime when her friend's ex-boyfriend broke in and tried to kidnap her on June 29.

She heard the punk break into the apartment, which is near 17th Avenue, as he was prying open her bedroom window at around 1 am.

Once inside, he left the bedroom for the living room to snatch up his former girlfriend, who was sleeping on the couch. But she woke up, slipped his grasp and hid in the bathroom.

The 43-year-old disgruntled lover fled, but was later caught by police.

Are we lost?

A 61-year-old SUV owner had his navigational system taken on June 28.

The owner of the 2006 Toyota Ray 4 parked the car on 71st Street and 17th Avenue, but when he returned the following morning, the driver's side window was smashed and the satellite guidance system was gone.

Home front rob

A 78th Street man was robbed at gunpoint right in front of his building on June 26.

The victim was approaching the building, which is near 20th Avenue, at around 1 am when one thug pulled out a black pistol. The other rifled the victim's pockets, taking his cellphone, and a wallet that contained \$20, police said.

The two punks fled down 78th Street.

Pol pushes for black magic

By Matthew Lysiak
The Brooklyn Paper

One cop is willing to do anything to get kids excited about books—even if that means recruiting a little hocus pocus to accomplish the task.

Last Monday, state Senator Marty Golden (R-Bay Ridge) announced plans for a book party in honor of the release of "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows," the last in author J.K. Rowling's series.

The blessed event would take place on Friday, July 20 in front of the Bookmark Shoppe.

As he made his announcement, Golden (above) was greeted by a handful of fans (Potter fans, that is) and two young wizards in full garb.

"I love Harry Potter because he can do anything," said the young magician from under his golden wizard hat.

Golden shared the young lad's sentiment.

"I am a big Harry Potter fan, and I can't wait for the new book to hit the shelves," he said. "I myself have stayed up many a sleepless night reading these books."

(Some political insiders joked that it's no wonder that Golden is such a fan of black magic—he'll need plenty if the Conservative Republican is going to be the next mayor.)

Kids and pots aren't the only ones caught-up in Potter-mania. The appeal of Potter is universal, according to Shoppe owner Bina Valenzano.

"Harry Potter casts a spell on all ages," said Valenzano. "It is essentially the story of a boy who is bullied and picked on, who is then swept away to a magical place where he is important and loved."

The "Harry Potter Midnight Bash" is scheduled to begin at 8 pm on July 20 in front of Bookmark Shoppe (8415 Third Ave.) and conclude at midnight, when the book is officially put on sale.



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Update: CB10 backs 'Depot'

By Matthew Lysiak
The Brooklyn Paper

A developer's plan to build a new Home Depot and 214 units of housing along a vacant Bay Ridge railroad got a big thumbs up from Community Board 10 late Wednesday night, despite weeks of controversy over the proposal.

The board vote was 30-11.

The vote came only a week after CB10's Zoning and Land-Use Committee not only rejected developer Andrew Kohen's request for a zoning change on the commercial land in the railroad at 62nd Street and Eighth Avenue, but also made him stand for two hours while members berated him.

The developer needs the rezoning so he can build the profitable residential units in the complex, which would consist of an 11-story building with 216 apartments, office space, and the 100,000-square-foot Home Depot (see rendering above).

On Wednesday night, CB10 members again complained about the project's size, but the majority of members supported the project.

Board member Steve Harrison, an outspoken critic of Kohen's, even flipped his vote, in part due to a strong call to action by Councilman Vince Gentile (D-Bay Ridge).

"This project will bolster the area, spruce up the surroundings and provide significant employment and housing," Gentile said.

Kohen, who sent several minutes before the meeting praying quietly near the entrance, was gratified by the news.

"Unless people stop having babies and looking for jobs, then we need development," said Kohen.

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LETTERS

Longfellow deserves serenade, not dishonor

To the editor,

I think it is a mistake to dismiss the proposal to rename PS 94 from the "School of Diverse Languages and Cultures" as an act of "political correctness" ("School's memory short on Longfellow," June 23). Writer Chris O'Connell lambasts the "all-too-American practice of forgetting the past" while forgetting himself that the past is built on its own version of political correctness, which, in America, promoted a Euro-centric vision of our country.

While I don't expect to see Frederick Douglass on the dollar bill any time in the near future, small achievements like reminding students that they are part of a culturally vibrant society should not be discounted as mere window dressing.

David Tarkenton, Cobble Hill

To the editor,

I was disappointed in your recent article about the requested name change at PS 94.

The article was far too subjective for the front page of a newspaper. Phrases like "crash on the rocks of political correctness" and "the jargon name change" have no place in a news article. As the old adage goes, journalists should show, not tell.

If you're convinced that the name "School of Diverse Languages and Cultures" is jargon, you should trust that that will be clear to your readers from the name itself, without your having to add the label.

That said, the proposed new name is certainly relevant to the current student body. PS 94 works hard to celebrate the many cultures and languages of its students while integrating them into a single community.

The school has embraced dual-language education, which lets native English speakers learn another language while helping immigrant children learn English. PS 94 offers dual-language programs in both Spanish and Chinese, the only school in the city to do so. In an international city like New York, I feel that every child should learn a second language, and I applaud PS 94 for making that possible for so many of its students. Longfellow would surely agree.

Mary Powell Thomas, Boerum Hill
The writer is president of the Community Education Council for District 15.

No, she's wrong!

To the editor,

Letter writer Amanda Sawyer of Park Slope recently complained about the new businesses in her neighborhood, one of which I have a particular interest in ("Wrong on

Why no love?

To the editor,

If The Brooklyn Paper would look beyond its own shallow interpretation, they might see that what is happening at 345 Eldert St. in Bushwick is really a cultural celebration by artists who are honoring the spirit of July 4, not some leftist cry against corporations ("Their Independence Day," June 30-July 7).

Some of the artists have contributed redefined themes of American culture for the event — which is lacking today, as American mass culture loses itself to the usual rhetoric and fears of terrorism propagated by corruption.

Do we really need another mockery of individuals who are trying to live differently, people who may express common concerns about economic freedom? And is not another medium that attacks differences. Kudos to the artists of the United Studios of Eldert.

Now, more than ever, we need freedom of thought, liberty, and expression, not another medium that attacks differences. Kudos to the artists of the United Studios of Eldert.

Editor's note: No offense intended. This newspaper always stands strongly in defense of freedom of expression, as our letters column demonstrates.

Fourth Av., June 23).

I am the wife of the owner of Mule Cafe and I can assure you that our garden has never been packed with drinkers on a weekday evening.

My husband puts in many hours trying to make Mule a viable business in a once-dangerous stretch and often closes the place himself.

We are not open past midnight and have never had a loud crowd in our serene garden.

We are sensitive to our neighbors' concerns, and, as a result, have yet to receive a phone call or complaint about our business.

I cannot speak for Cherry Tree, another establishment Sawyer cited, but am familiar with them as neighbors. I would not be surprised that they would surely oblige any request to tone down their outside noise.

Cafes, bars, restaurants and city life go hand in hand and I do believe with proper communication there is much room for living harmoniously.

Tara Sansone, Park Slope

And so is he!

To the editor,

Your letters section recently featured a missive from Mark Brennan that featured a cheap shot that offhandedly associated atheism with communism and fascism ("Suspended disbelief," June 23). Brennan



Christopher Rodriguez, Bushwick

has absolutely backwards. The evils of Communism and Fascism were not so different from the evils of any religious system that allows sycophants to gain power using religious beliefs.

Communism and Fascism were both secular religions with their own prophets, sacred texts, belief systems and rituals; from Marx and "Das Kapital" to Hitler and "Mein Kampf." Neither of these historical movements was "about" atheism and atheism is not about any particular social organization.

More to the point is that religions, communism and fascism each enable and elevate those who might be most intent on achieving social control.

A part of today's gathering wave of discontent with our president and vice president is recognition of the disconnect between their support of religion, their use of moral language, and the immoral outcomes of whatever they become involved with. In fact, that pair is enough to make anyone doubt that there is a God.

Alan Roemer, Prospect Heights

Editor's note: We received so many letters during our Independence Week vacation that we chose to let our readers fill our opinion page. Don't worry, though. Our award-winning editorials will return next week.

Make plaza Grand

To the editor,

I am happy to see that someone is trying to bring order to the chaos that is Grand Army Plaza ("The Squared Circle," June 30-July 7). Somehow though, there doesn't seem to be an understanding of what actually happens on the side streets leading into and from the plaza — and, as such, the proposed solutions only create equally disastrous ones. For example, where does the traffic go that regularly travels up Union Street to Eastern Parkway and Flatbush Avenue if there is no direct route to these streets? They'll probably head up St. Johns Place, where they'll create even more dangerous conditions.

I suspect that the willingness of the city to work on Grand Army Plaza with neighborhood folks is a diversion from focusing on the more serious traffic problems on Flatbush, Atlantic and Fourth avenues, problems that the Department of Transportation has ignored since at least the 1960s and whose solutions extend all the way into Manhattan.

The city has refused offers of help from professionals and watched idly as those problems are being exacerbated by all the development in Downtown Brooklyn and especially by the proposed super mega-development of Atlantic Yards.

Bob Orling, Park Slope

It's no 'payoff'

To the editor,

If you had done a little research in your recent story about the Khalil Gibran Academy ("Boerum Hill school gets Gibran payoff," June 30), you would have learned that these "perks" are not "rewards" by any stretch of the imagination.

In fact, the Department of Education has promised to make sure the School Construction Authority actually builds a long-planned and already funded technology lab in our school. The SCA's inability or unwillingness to get the job done caused the school to cancel its technology program altogether last year. Promising to get the lab built is not a "reward." It is simply doing what they were supposed to have done already.

The reason that the Parent-Teacher Association insisted that the Depart-

ALL DRAWN OUT



ment of Education put its promises into writing was to make the agency accountable for so many broken promises of the past.

Perhaps that should have been the theme of your article: Why don't parents trust the Department of Education, the entity responsible for educating our children?

Katie Lief, Cobble Hill

Pool partier

To the editor,

I am thrilled that we will have the use of the Floating Pool this summer ("Everybody in the barge," June 30). When the Brooklyn Bridge Park development plans were first shown to the neighborhood, the one thing I wanted to see was an outdoor pool. I have back and leg problems and have been told to walk in the water. My doctor is also thrilled about the pool.

Mona Bragman, Brooklyn Heights

Smells a Ratner

To the editor,

After the Assembly ruined an otherwise worthy extension of the 42A law by including special breaks for Atlantic Yards and Bruce Ratner ("Bruce Boost," June 30), I wrote the

following letter to our Borough President, Marty Markowitz:

Dear Marty:
You and I may have some differences on Atlantic Yards, but in general I have been supportive of the arena and the affordable housing that Bruce Ratner proposes to build. But the latest handout to FCR by the state legislature has me appalled. You have always been a staunch supporter of affordable housing. I ask you take a principled stand on this matter. Tell Gov. Spitzer that the added support for Atlantic Yards is really beyond any reason. Even ACORN, one of the biggest supporters of Atlantic Yards, has called the carve-out for Ratner "bad public policy" because it provides hundreds of millions in tax money for luxury housing.

Enough is more than enough. The legacy of Atlantic Yards will be directly on your watch. Spitzer should veto the bill and tell the legislature to pass 42A reform without this boondoggle for Ratner.

Sidney Meyer, Boerum Hill

F express now!

To the editor,

Based on the article "Can I get an express F, please?" (June 23), I support Gary Reilly's petition.

If repairs really need to be done to stations before an F express can be a reality, then the G line should be extended to Coney Island and the F line could skip some stops.

As it is now, every time the G train gets to Smith Ninth Street, many passengers are left waiting for the F train — and most of the times it is already full.

One more thing: the G line and the F line are the worst lines in the subway system. The G line is always with three or four cars instead of the regular eight or 10 cars.

The worst lines in the subway system happen to be in the most populated borough of New York City. The people of Brooklyn deserve better.

John Gibbons, Jr., Boerum Hill

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The Brooklyn Paper's essential guide to the Borough of Kings

July 14, 2007

Sketched out

'Local' writer Brian Wood sees the borough's comic value

By Chris Varnus
for The Brooklyn Paper

Some people are drawn to Brooklyn, but in the case of Park Slope-based comic book artist Brian Wood, the borough is drawn to him.

What Wood is perhaps best known for is "DMZ" — shorthand for demilitarized zone — a comic that explores a war-torn and deeply misunderstood New York. Sandwiched between two sides of a civil war between the "Free States" (New Jersey and what lies westward) and the "United States of America" (Brooklyn and Long Island), Manhattan becomes a staging ground for countless battles and blasts.

Readers travel through the city with rookie photojournalist protagonist Matty Roth, hitting Red Hook, DUMBO and Park Slope along the way. And life goes on. No one in the war zone is forced to eat rats or pigeons. In fact, they grow organic gardens on their rooftops — even amidst enemy mortar fire. "DMZ" reflects real divisions in our country and society, because Brian is incredibly knowledgeable and aware [of] cultural and political events," said James Lucas, Wood's editor at comic publisher Oni Press. "He's just tapped in."

Wood arrived at the medium relatively late, when he was already an art student at Parsons in 1997. "I walked blindly into a comic shop," he said, "and suddenly I saw that comics weren't the pulp stuff from my childhood, but had evolved into a mature and



Stoop-er hero: Park Slope's Brian Wood, as imagined in "DMZ" world, has immortalized the borough in his comic books.

sophisticated medium."

Inspired by the "really smart and cool" comics that he discovered, he made a comic book of his own as his final project. At that time, Wood was concentrating on being an

artist, but he did all the writing as "a control thing," he said. These days, Wood does all of the writing, but leaves the drawing to illustrators like Ryan Kelly.

Taking a series of Web site design jobs during the dot-com boom, Wood dropped out of the comic world for a few years. In 2000, British comic artist Warren Ellis offered him a writing job on Marvel Comics' "Generation X," a spin-off of the highly lucrative "X-Men" franchise. Wood worked on 12 issues before he returned to independent comics in 2001, producing several graphic novels and miniseries.

In 2003, Wood quit his day job as a designer at Rockstar Games (the video game company best known for "Grand Theft Auto"), and teamed with artist Becky Cloonan to create "Demo," a monthly comic series that was the start of the single issue, "done-in-one" format that's all the rage in independent comics.

The "Demo" format proved so successful that Wood went on to replicate it in his 12-issue series "Local."

"Local" differs from its predecessor in that it focuses on one character, Megan McKean, whose arc is gradually traced through the series, even if she is not always the protagonist within each issue. This difference has led "Local" down its own path; Wood refers to it as "transcending its 'done-in-one' format to really be about Megan's story, her life, that progression over time."

Each issue documents a local scene of some kind and always in a different town. In Local #6, for example, Megan finds herself sharing an apartment in Park Slope and bar-

See BRIAN WOOD on page 10

ART Fly by

For plenty of commuters, the Brooklyn Bridge is a symbol for being stuck in traffic, but for the artists at the Brooklyn Waterfront Artist's Coalition (BWAC), a show beneath the bridge is all about flight.

"Still Flying," which opened on June 30, is the 25th annual outdoor sculpture show by BWAC, and sits along the DUMBO Waterfront.

The location inspired the aviation-themed show, said co-curator Ursula Clark. "The wind in that area suggests movement and helps [enhance] the idea of flying," she said.

Metal artist Doug McKesson's work, "Swooping II," pictured, fits in perfectly. His metal bird, made from lawnmower and tractor blades and caught mid-flight, has the appearance of flying over the East River. What about the real, live birds in the park? "They might think it's a good place to land," he said.

"Still Flying" is up through Aug. 25 in Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park and the park at the foot of Washington Street in DUMBO. For information, visit www.bwac.org. —Katie Newingham



BOOKS Mature magic

The students of Hogwart's School of Witchcraft will be the only teens in the room at Wood's bookstore on July 20. While the shop is having a party to celebrate the release of "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows," the final book in the popular series, no kiddie conjurers will be allowed.

"It's really the adults who are reading 'Harry Potter,'" Wood owner Christine Onorati told GO Brooklyn. While kids usually swarm her store, Onorati is hoping to give the expected 100 grow-ups a place to drink from her cauldron without having to dodge mini-Voldemort under foot.

Adult fans like Judy Nysten, 65, of Sunset Park, are glad to have the chance to mingle and enjoy themselves outside of the all-ages events at other area stores.

"Every year at Halloween I have my own 'Harry Potter' party for adults," she said. "I'm just obsessed with it." The party will take place at 11 pm on July 20 at Wood (126 Franklin St. at Milton Street in Greenpoint). Admission is free. For information, call (718) 383-0096. —Adam Rathe

MUSIC Soul patrol

The McCarren Park Pool usually draws a crowd for its rollicking rock shows. But on July 15, the venue's organizers are banking on Brooklynites showing up to see something just a bit different. Making its New York City debut, the six-year-old "Ponderosa Stomp" is a celebration of "American roots music" — an umbrella term for blues, jazz, country, reggae and soul that led to early rock 'n' roll.

Unsung heroes including Tommy McClain (pictured) — all influential, if not widely known — will perform backed by members of Yo La Tengo.

The event's founder, Dr. Ike, knows that Brooklynites might be resistant to these old-fashioned sounds, but thinks that with open hearts and ears, locals will find something they like. "The whole idea is to educate the public about the contributions and effects on American culture of these great pioneering musicians," Ike told GO Brooklyn.

"Ponderosa Stomp" will take place at 3 pm on July 15 at the McCarren Park Pool (Lorimer Street at Bayard Street in Williamsburg). Admission is free. For information, call (718) 302-5050. —Sarah McCormick



Win, lose or draw

Brian Wood's "Local" hit Park Slope a few issues back, and while the brownstone that heroine Megan McKean lived in (left) wasn't based on a real house, plenty of the places where she hung out were. Test your Slope IQ by identifying these neighborhood spots:



1. Great Lakes Bar
2. Park Cafe
3. The French Shop at Sherbrooke and Eighth Avenue



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I Hate Margarita Mix!

By Darrin Siegfried

There I said it, loud and clear: I hate Margarita mix! Now I love a good, cold Margarita, straight up, salt the rim, please. It's one of my favorite cocktails, and one that becomes even more popular when the weather turns hot. It's potent without being overpowering, refreshing, and has a delicious balance of sweet and sour that keeps you coming back for just one more sip. But make a Margarita with one of the mixes and you end up with something other than a Margarita. Take a minute to read the list of ingredients on the Margarita mix package and ask yourself if you really want to put that chemical swamp into your body.

Like all classic cocktails that have lasted over the years, a good Margarita is fairly easy to make. Here's my favorite recipe, from my friend Dale Degroff. Dale is known as "The King of Cocktails" and is the author of "The Craft of the Cocktail," the finest book that I know of on the bartender's bookshelf, amateur and professional alike.

The Original Margarita

1 1/2 oz. 100% blue agave plata Tequila
3/4 oz. freshly squeezed lime juice
1 1/4 oz. Cointreau

Shake together all ingredients with fresh ice cubes in a cocktail shaker until well chilled, about a count of ten. Take one of the lime rims and run it around the outside edge of a cocktail glass (Be careful to avoid the inside of the glass, or you'll have salt in your drink.) Dip the edge of the glass into Kosher salt (iodized table salt just won't work) so that half of the outside edge of the glass is coated. Strain the drink into the glass.

Simple? Yes. Delicious? Absolutely! There's one very important rule to follow: use good ingredients, starting with the Tequila. During the days of Prohibition bartenders had to be wizards, since the liquor that they had to work with was usually pretty bad. The law kept most of the "real" booze from getting into the country and locally made was all there was. Making a good tasting drink from this was an art, and many of the cocktails that we still drink today came out of those bad old days. Since we have a wide selection of liquors available to us at reasonable costs, start with good alcohol. True Tequila is made from 100% blue agave. Most of the commercial brands use the bare minimum of 51% agave

required by Mexican law, with the remaining 49% nothing more than cheap grain spirits. Most of the cheap Tequila made in the US is really nothing more than artificially flavored Vodka, with no agave at all used in making it.

My Tequilas of choice for a Margarita are Centenario Plata, Herradura Silver and Patron Silver. Plata, or Silver, is unaged Tequila. It is clear in color or may have a faint greenish cast. Añejo is slightly aged, traditionally in redwood barrels, but more recently in oak. The law requires a minimum of only six months of aging, but better houses hold their Añejos longer. These will have a light smoky taste, still good for a mixed drink. The oldest, darkest and most flavorful Tequila is labeled Reposado, and is aged the longest. I don't use Reposado for mixing, preferring to enjoy it the way I would a fine brandy, sipped slowly after a meal, no lime or salt, thank you.

Why Cointreau? Cointreau belongs to the group of fruit brandy-based liqueurs called Triple Sec, which means "triple dry". In reality triple sec is sweet and has a tart, slightly peppery orange peel flavor which should come only from Curaçao (aka SAH oh) oranges. Cointreau is the finest triple sec available, and one of the only brands to use Curaçao oranges instead of artificial flavoring agents. If you'll take the time to taste it alongside other triple secs, you'll understand why I use nothing else. It will only cost a few pennies more per drink for the real thing, and your drinks will taste much better for it.

Nothing beats fresh fruit juice for making drinks. Bottled juices can't compare. Be your own judge: taste a bottled lime juice (or a mix) next to the real thing and make up your own mind. Limes have become very affordable over the past few years, so buying a bagful for a party won't set you back more than a few dollars. Pressing down firmly on the side of each lime, roll it back and forth on a counter or table top. This will help to break up the cells inside the fruit and will yield more juice. — and use a juicer to squeeze the juice out, not just your hand. A simple wooden citrus reamer can be picked up at a housewares shop.

I think that you'll agree, a well-made Margarita is a delicious drink, and it's really simple to make an authentic one: no mix required!

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Photo: Michael O'Connell

Bastille Lites

Let us eat cake — and a whole lot more — at this weekend's French holiday feast

By Tina Barry
for The Brooklyn Paper

On July 15, Smith Street will look a bit more like the Champs-Élysées thanks to its annual Bastille Day celebration. Much of the street closes for an all-day (and well into the evening) celebration in honor of the storming of the Bastille in 1789, the symbolic beginning of the French Revolution. In Paris, the grand boulevard closes for a military parade up the avenue, and while Brooklyn might not do that, we can drink and feast with the best of 'em.

The feast associated with Bastille Day is meant to honor the peasants who helped to oust King Louis XVI and his empathy-challenged wife Marie Antoinette, who were rumored to have gorged while the public starved.

In modern-day Brooklyn, there are two new French spots with chefs who have no problem saying, "Let them eat cake!"

Emily Isaac, the former pastry chef at Union Square Cafe, opened her very French bakery Trois Pommès Pâtisserie in Park Slope this past May.

"My baking is American with a French twist," Isaac said to me. "I trained at the French Culinary Institute



Let's French: Sweeten your Bastille Day with tasty treats like the French toast at Le Barricou, top, or a pastry from Trois Pommès Pâtisserie, above.

in New York City, so my technique is based on the French pastry-making tradition." With its brick walls, high ceilings and tremendous crystal chandeliers, Isaac's new shop reflects true Parisian style.

And just like the bakers in the City of Light, there's no skimping here on

DINING

Le Barricou (535 Grand St., between Union Avenue and Lorimer Street in Williamsburg) accepts cash only. The restaurant serves dinner daily and brunch on weekends from 11 am-4 pm. Closed Tuesday. Entrees: \$8-\$14. Subway: O to Le Lorimer St./Metropolitan Ave. For information, call (718) 782-7372.

Trois Pommès Pâtisserie (260 Fifth Ave., at Carroll Street in Park Slope) accepts cash only. The bakery is open Tuesday and Wednesday from 7 am-8 pm, Thursday and Friday from 7 am-10 pm, Saturday from 8 am-10 pm and Sunday from 9 am-5 pm. Closed Monday. Pastries: \$2-\$5; whole pies and cakes: \$25-\$40; ice cream and sorbet: \$3-\$5. Subway: R to Union St. For more information, call (718) 230-3119.

fine ingredients. The tender crust on her fresh, seasonal fruit pies is made with all butter and no shortening and no artificial flavors are employed in anything. When chocolate is called for, only the rich, French chocolate Valrhona will do.

In addition to the popular pies, Isaac bakes up lush cakes, pastries and cookies as well. Need something more? Ice cream is made in-house with fruits and herbs from the Grand Army Plaza greenmarket — and the tastes of the produce shine through. Flavors like lavender honey, sour cherry, fresh mint chocolate chip and buttery caramel crunch are swoon inducing.

Pair a slice of the cherry pie with a scoop of house-made blueberry sorbet, add a cup of the Gorilla coffee that they pour, and dig into a perfect Bastille Day treat.

Across town, Jean-Pierre Marquet, who started a revolution of his own with Marquet Pâtisserie in 1987 on then-tougher Smith Street, is celebrating at his new bistro, Le Barricou.

"It's like Paris here," Marquet said of his Williamsburg locale. "People like to leave for vacation."

For heat-resistant types who linger in the neighborhood, Marquet said that his partner and chef Joah Masse (formerly of Balhazar and Lulu), "will be cooking his usual very, very good food" for the holiday. In the 2,500 square foot space there's plenty of room at the expansive bar to linger over Masse's globe-spanning, classic French, Latin and Asian menu.

"He's Spanish and he has worked in Thai kitchens, too," said Marquet of Masse, "so that comes through in the cooking." For a commemorative Bastille Day feast, there's escargot or grilled tiger shrimp with mango, avocado with spinach salad tossed in Osaka dressing, traditional cod au vin or Thai mussels in red chili-coconut cream sauce. For dessert? Creme brulee, of course. Toss on a few strawberries and blueberries and you've got an Independence Day special. Vive la France!

Get baked

The revolving-door restaurant landscape on Brooklyn Height's Henry Street is difficult for even the most devoted foodie to follow. With restaurants opening and closing about as fast as Joey Chestnut's mouth, it's hard to figure the key to finding success on the high-rent street.

Chris Fehlinger, owner of Oven, the latest spot to open on the strip, thinks the answer is simplicity. Oven focuses on specialty pizzas and an extensive wine list — over 180 bottles and more than 40 half-bottles — making what Fehlinger calls "a wonderful combination."

The thin-crust pizzas range from old-time favorites to the inventive and a bit out there — but all go well beyond the traditional Margherita pie. A chicken curry pizza is topped with cashews, green peppers, red onions and mozzarella, baked in a curry flavored tomato sauce and topped with a yogurt mint sauce. An eggplant pizza is topped with an assortment of cheeses and pine nuts, a surprisingly crunchy and complementary combo. And there's even a roasted

asparagus pizza with Vermont goat cheese and oven-roasted Roma tomatoes, served on a creme fraiche base. Fehlinger wanted to open a restaurant that could serve as both a weeknight spot for a quick meal and a destination for the weekend diner. While most pizzas are about \$13, those looking to splurge can dish out \$30 for the Kobe steak pizza drizzled with black truffle oil.

With a wide variety of wines to choose from, it's best to get some help. Fehlinger has a "sommelier in training" on staff to help pair the perfect pizza and wine — though in this case trial and error doesn't sound too bad.

Oven (60 Henry St., at Cranberry Street in Brooklyn Heights) accepts American Express, MasterCard and Visa. Lunch approximately \$12. Dinner entrees approximately \$16. The eatery is open Tuesday through Saturday 11:30 am-3 pm and 5:30-11pm and Sunday 5-10 pm. Subway: A/C to High St. or 2/3 to Clark St. For information, call (718) 468-6836 or visit www.oven-ny.com. — Juliana Bunim



Photo: Michael O'Connell

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Bed (Stuy) & breakfast

A local love shack makes the perfect weekend getaway

By Danielle Douglas
for The Brooklyn Paper

Enjoying the ambience of a quaint inn in a far-flung paradise with your sweetheart would be great, but would you believe you could have the same type of amorous adventure in Bedford-Stuyvesant?

Nestled among the brownstones of a neighborhood where you might least expect it is an opportunity for a romantic in-town getaway, Akwaaba Mansion.

The building, an 1860s Victorian mansion, fell into disrepair until 1995 when Monique Greenwood and her husband Glen Pope, who lived down the street at the time, purchased it with the intention of replicating a B&B they had visited in Cape May, New Jersey.

After a nine-month renovation that cost close to \$100,000, they opened Akwaaba — which means “welcome”

in Twi, one of the languages of Ghana. The inn offers four rooms decorated with African textiles and Victorian antiques, as well as a library, courtyard and glass-enclosed porch.

“In the mid ’90s, there were no major hotel chains in Brooklyn, so we figured we could be successful housing the friends and family of people who lived in the neighborhood as they came to visit,” Greenwood told GO Brooklyn. “But what we quickly learned is that in a place as hectic as New York, a lot of [local] folks just need a quick getaway with lots of special touches.”

Early on, Greenwood noticed the trend of New Yorkers looking for a quick weekend vacation without leaving town. But as Brooklyn has become a more popular tourist destination and Bedford-Stuyvesant has been tagged as up-and-coming, foreign business has boomed for Akwaaba.

This summer, three times as many



Room, not bored: The “Jumping the Broom” room, above, at Akwaaba Mansion in Bedford-Stuyvesant, is one of the four themed rooms that the bed and breakfast has available.

European visitors have stayed at Akwaaba than in years past, Greenwood said. “It’s because Brooklyn is the borough where everybody wants to be.”

But whether they’re from near or far, couples have become the majority of guests filling the rooms.

“We get quite a few local couples that come to celebrate wedding anniversaries or spend their wedding night with us before leaving for their honeymoon,” she said. “We’ve even

had a number of proposals.”

Chris and Sara Evans, who recently visited Akwaaba, were delighted by its amenities. “It’s a very charming bed and breakfast,” said Sara. “The candles and the rose petals were such a nice touch.”

In response to the inn’s popularity, Greenwood and her staff now offer a variety of services to heat up a weekend. “We offer a turnaround service; we draw their bathwater and place candles

See AKWAABA on page 10

What’s inn

Akwaaba Mansion might be a romantic spot for a weekend getaway, but when you’re booking a room for mom and dad, it’s more pleasant not to think of such things. Sure, anything’s better than out-of-towners staying with you, but as long as brownstones are being turned into quaint lodges across the borough, you might as well put your visitors in one of the finest.

The Awesome Bed and Breakfast (136 Lawrence St., at Wiloughby Street in Downtown Brooklyn) is close to the Brooklyn Bridge and offers themed rooms like “Gothic Nights” and “Ancient Madagascar” from \$130 per night. For information, call (718) 858-4859 or visit www.awesomebed-and-breakfast.com.

The Bed and Breakfast on the Park (113 Prospect Park West, between Sixth and Seventh streets in Park Slope) offers upscale accommodations — one room even has a private rooftop garden — but

keeps guests close to the Park Slope action from \$165 per night. For information, call (718) 499-6115 or visit www.bhny.com.

Regina’s New York Bed and Breakfast (16 Ft. Greene Pl., at DeKalb Avenue in Fort Greene) is steps from BAM, Fort Greene Park and all sorts of other things that will keep your visitors amused — and it’s affordable. Rooms start at \$99 per night. For information, call (718) 834-9253.

The Union Street Bed and Breakfast (405 Union St., between Smith and Hoyt streets in Carroll Gardens) has six rooms, all of which come with cable and complementary breakfast — but being this close to Smith Street’s restaurant row, guests won’t have a shortage of places to eat. Rooms start at \$150 per night. For information, call (718) 852-8406 or visit www.unionstreetbrooklynhandb.com.

— Adam Ratho

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AKWAABA

Continued from page 9

and rose petals throughout the room," said Greenwood. All four of the guestrooms, she noted, come with either a large Jacuzzi or claw-foot tub, perfect for a soothing bubble bath for two. If a bath isn't enough, Greenwood said that, "one of our more popular requests is for the couples' massage."

Echoing Evans' sentiment, Demeetria Silvera, who stayed at the inn with her fiancé this past May, praised Greenwood and her staff of two. "After [he] proposed, this was a wonderful surprise," said Silvera, who added that she was astonished by the beauty of the property given its urban location.

The elegance of the inn is the result of the ongoing renovations that Greenwood and Pogue have done to the property. The arduous task of turning the single-family house into someplace that people would pay to stay was even showcased on a 2003 episode of the home improvement television show "Restore America."

And it's certainly paid off. Remember the Cape May inn that inspired Greenwood and Pogue to open Akwaaba? In 2006, the couple purchased it and added it to their stable of luxury inns, now five strong with locations in Washington, DC and New Orleans.

And for many long-time residents of the neighborhood where it all started, Akwaaba is a welcomed addition. Monetta Harris, who has lived across the street from the mansion for the past 30 years, witnessed its gradual deterioration and eventual rebirth. "That couple did a full 360 on the place," she said. "It was such an eyesore — kids used to say it was haunted. But now it's a bustling part of the neighborhood, attracting all kinds of visitors."

Akwaaba Mansion (347 Macdonough St., between Stuyvesant and Lewis avenues in Bedford-Stuyvesant) has rooms available from \$160 per night on weekdays and \$175 per night on weekends. For information, call (718) 455-9958 or visit www.akwaaba.com.



Light and sweet: Sarah DeVita and Joe Rinaldi, above, make an iced coffee at Caffè Capri, the Williamsburg institution that they've run for 34 years.

This brew's for you

Haven't got the time to make your own iced coffee? GO Brooklyn's Juliana Bunim filtered out Brooklyn's five best beaneries for cool caffeine.

1. After choosing an iced brew — light, medium or dark — **Caffè Capri** (pictured) pours it over ice chips made from real coffee. This iced coffee never gets watered down, making it good to the last drop.

A large iced coffee at Caffè Capri (427 Graham Ave., at Withers Street in Williamsburg) is \$4.

2. For a serious and economical java jolt, polish off a 3-ounce iced coffee from **Front Street Pizza**. This oversized jug of joe will keep you running all day long.

A large iced coffee at Front Street Pizza (80 Front St., at Washington Street in DUMBO) is \$2.50.

3. D'Amico Foods offers iced coffee in both decaf and regular, with flavored op-



tions like Hazelnut or French Vanilla. For a twist, try a frozen non-dairy cappuccino. A large iced coffee at D'Amico Foods (309 Court St., at Degraw Street in Cobble Hill) is \$2.50. A large frozen cappuccino is \$2.25.

4. **Gorilla Coffee** serves some of the most powerful iced coffee in the borough. And all the beans are organic and fair trade.

A large iced coffee at Gorilla Coffee (97 Fifth Ave., at Park Place in Park Slope) is \$2.25.

5. Every iced coffee is prepared individually at **Smooch Organic Cafe** by combining freshly brewed espresso and ice. For a treat, opt for the spicy chocolate iced mocha.

A large iced coffee at Smooch (264 Carlton Ave., at Dekalb Avenue in Fort Greene) is \$3. A large spicy chocolate iced mocha is \$4.

A frosty fix

What's the deal with iced coffee?

By Rebecca Flint Marx
for The Brooklyn Paper

Everyone loves iced coffee — but no one loves paying \$3-\$4 for a cup of what is basically plain old joe poured over ice cubes. Of course, there's a better way: make it at home.

The hubbub lately has been over cold-brewing coffee, a multi-step home approach that involves soaking your ground beans overnight in cold water to extract the flavor and then straining the sludge twice before diluting it to your taste. When we asked our favorite baristas how they made their frosty java, though, we learned that everyone has a method that they think is just right.

Karl Scholz, a barista at Cafe Grumpy in Greenpoint, was happy to give us tips on how to do it — and do it right. His first lesson: iced coffee is not just regular java served over cubes.

At Grumpy's, baristas use one-third to one-half less water when making drip coffee destined for a sub-freezing future. This double-strength coffee is then poured into a large jar filled with ice.

Some local establishments aren't content with plain old frozen water in their coffee, though. Carolina Whitson, owner of the Red Horse Cafe in Park Slope, not only brews organic coffee, but then pours it over coffee ice cubes. Another bonus? Affordability. A 12-ounce iced-coffee is \$2, 16-ounce is \$2.50 and a 20-ounce is \$3. And, if you're making iced coffee at home, it's an easy step to follow.

Cafe Grumpy's Manhattan location uses an \$11,000 coffee maker called the Clover, but Scholz said that nothing so fancy is necessary for home brewing.

He recommended Grumpy's Bolivian, Ethiopian or Rwandan blend and told GO Brooklyn that as long as you've got a coffee-maker and a freezer, a quality cup of iced coffee is only a few cubes away.



Hey, Joe: Iced coffee at Cafe Grumpy, above, is a great way to beat the heat. Baristas recommend that you drink it black in order to maintain the carefully crafted flavor.

Cafe Grumpy (193 Meserole Ave., at Diamond Street in Greenpoint) is open Monday through Friday from 7 am-7 pm, Saturday from 9 am-6 pm and Sunday from 9 am-6 pm. For information, call (718) 349-7623.

Red Horse Cafe (497 Sixth Ave., at 12th Street in Park Slope) is open Monday through Thursday from 7 am-10 pm, Friday from 7 am-midnight, Saturday from 8 am-midnight and Sunday from 8 am-10 pm. For information, call (718) 499-4973.

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Doctor's notes

Brooklyn Philharmonic and Maimonides team up for an unusual music therapy program

By Juliana Bunim
for The Brooklyn Paper

Diane Austin rubbed her hands together and placed them on her throat. "Eeeeeeeeee. Can you feel the vibration?" Because we're an instrument, too," she said.

In a circle, 10 adult men and women sat imitating her sounds, fingers pressed on their necks, enraptured by their similarity to a classical instrument.

Austin, a senior faculty member at New York University, leads the Brooklyn Philharmonic's pilot music therapy program at Maimonides Hospital in Borough Park, and the participants are patients in the hospital's psychiatric outpatient facility.

The unique program combines the skills of professional musicians with the expertise of music therapists to provide a new mode for patients to communicate through.

"It's a different way to talk about things," said Austin. "People sing things they wouldn't normally say. The deep breathing brings oxygen to the brain and into the body and the viola integrates the

senses with the body."

The viola was Austin's first choice to accompany her lessons and Philharmonic violist Kerrick Sasaki understands why. "There is something about the viola in that middle range that is sort of human," Sasaki said. "It's a little introverted and it doesn't stick out. It's a sound that just surrounds you a little bit more and draws you out."

The Philharmonic secured funding to carry out the pilot program for four weeks this summer. After that, said Vice President Greg Pierson, the group hopes to find new sponsors.

"It's always easier to get funding once we have results established," said Pierson. "Then we know we're filling a need."

Austin handed out instruments to the group and sounds of clackers, chimes and drumsticks filled the room. Sasaki played "Lean on Me," and the viola's soothing sound quieted the patients. Austin then began to sing, and the group chimed in.

Afterwards, Austin used the song's theme to discuss with patients lean on. Some said church, others friends or fami-

ly. During another song patients sang about what they are going to "throw over the edge" and rid from their lives. The answers range from exhaustion and nervousness to depression and problems with their teeth.

Sara Gold, a Maimonides psychotherapist, hopes music therapy will become a permanent staple at the hospital. "It really transforms people," she said.

Music therapy complements patients' medical treatment by

looking at the person holistically, whereas doctors, nurses and pathologists tend to analyze deficits.

"The healthy parts of a person really come out," said Austin. "Where doctors see illness and diagnoses, we see a sense of humor. These are disempowered people and there is something powerful about being heard and getting validation."

For information, visit www.brooklynphilharmonic.org or www.dianeastin.com.

Egg on our face?

GO Brooklyn:

The egg cream made at Peter Pan Donut Shop in Greenpoint ("Cream of the Crop," June 30), is just wrong. A proper chocolate egg cream ("A" cream in 1950s Bay Ridge) has a deep brown body and a pure white top, coloration gained only when the chocolate syrup is added after the seltzer, not before.

The one from Peter Pan appeared to have a tawny liquid



crowned by tawny foam. To me, that means the drink was made backwards: syrup added before the seltzer created the foam, delivering bubbles that are visually dreadful, and not at all great tasting.

— Mary Rose Dalia, Park Slope



Brian Wood's "Local" visited Park Slope, where he scouted locations like Music Matters and this subway stop.

BRIAN WOOD

Continued from page 7

tending at neighborhood watering hole Great Lakes. "These are all places that I visit," Wood said. "Virtually everything [in the comic] is within three blocks from my house."

For kids browsing comic books, Wood's work — especially when it's taking place in their neighborhood — is very popular. "Brian's work appeals to an incredibly wide audience," said Alec Cox, owner of the Rocketship comic shop on Smith Street. "I can sell it to almost anyone and be confident

they'll enjoy it, regardless of gender, age or background."

And while "Local" won't come back to Brooklyn, "DMZ" will continue to feature the borough — something Wood enjoys doing. "Brooklyn is where I've chosen to put down roots," he said. "New York is a place often done in comics and not done right, so I have a lot of pride that I can write about my street and know what I'm writing about. Everything I write takes place here because it belongs to me, and I belong to it."

"Local" and "DMZ" are available at Rocketship (208 Smith St., at Baltic Street in Cobble Hill). For information, call (718) 797-1348. For back issues, visit www.onpress.com.

BROOKLYN BRIEFS

Hamilton Av bridge work all summer

But no problems yet reported on key span

By Nicholas Soloff
for The Brooklyn Paper

Construction on the Hamilton Avenue drawbridge, a vital Gowanus Canal span that carries traffic beneath the Gowanus Expressway from Park Slope to Carroll Gardens, has so far caused few traffic problems since beginning on June 30, even though half of the bridge's eight driving lanes are closed.

The current roadwork, which is part of the Department of Transportation's \$55-million reconstruction of the 65-year-old bridge, is scheduled to last through Labor Day.

The bridge transports an average of 45,000 vehicles a day across the canal, according to 2005 DOT figures.

With the entire northbound section of the 546-foot-long bridge closed for construction, the daily traffic flow has been reduced to two lanes in each direction on the southbound portion of the bridge, except during morning rush hour, when three lanes are made available for drivers heading towards Manhattan.

Despite what could have been a major upheaval, cars were moving steadily along the bridge in both directions during morning and evening rush hour last week.

"It's pretty nice, actually," said Traffic Agent Louis Ortiz, who arrived at 7 a.m. last Monday and spent 12 hours directing traffic.

Next summer, the traffic pattern will shift to allow the reconstruction of the southbound portion of the bridge. The entire reconstruction project, which will widen traffic lanes among other improvements, is scheduled for completion in January 2009, according to the DOT.

For now, any inconveniences suffered by motorists haven't proved serious enough to merit complaint, according to Craig Hammenman, district manager for Community Board 6, which covers neighborhoods on both sides of the bridge.

"We would have heard by now if it was a major problem," Hammenman said.

The ice cream man cometh

Brooklynites welcome a free ice cream treat

The Brooklyn Paper

The famed "Ice Cream Man" finally did Brooklyn last week — and everyone from our famously dieting Borough President to steamed kids to coiffed hipsters loved him.

Matt Allen, along with his 1969 Chevrolet ice cream truck "Bessie," was spotted dishing out Pink Panther, Good Humor Bars and Drumsticks to passers-by all over the borough. He snapped photos with Marty Markowitz at the Beep's "Camp Brooklyn"

camper send-off on July 2, doled out treats to swarms of concertgoers at McCarran Park pool and set up shop in front of the Superhero Supply Company in Park Slope. Allen claims to have a pretty mean sweat tooth. Not a bad thing for a thirty-something guy who spent the last three years driving around the country giving away ice cream. His goal is to hand out a total of 300,000 frozen treats. Currently, Allen claims to be hovering somewhere around 90,000.

"The bigger picture is to inspire and motivate young people to get out and do stuff," Allen told The Brooklyn Paper, while slinging ice cream at Fifth Avenue and Fifth Street last week in Park Slope. "I'm leading by example. I'm showing that you can do things that are non-traditional and fulfill your dreams."

Allen is able to pull off his venture through major sponsorship. A big Levi's sticker is prominently displayed on the side of his truck and The White Stripes created a cardboard ice cream holder with a picture of their latest album.

With such backing in place, Allen set out to put a face to the term "Ice Cream Man."

"He never had a face attached to him," Allen said. "I decided to make myself that guy. If we can do that then hopefully through branding, merchandising and marketing, we can make a buck."

Not surprisingly, Brooklynites were skeptical of the freebie. "The first thing everyone asks is, 'OK, why is it free?'" said Allen. "It's like, 'What's the catch?'"

—Juliana Bunin



Matt Allen has been traveling the country in his ice cream truck and giving out free treats.

Police arrest Rev. Billy for harassing them

By Dana Rubinstein

The Brooklyn Paper

Windsor Terrace-based performance artist Rev. Billy (a.k.a. Bill Talen) demanded on Saturday that charges against him be dropped, following his recent arrest for allegedly harassing police during a gathering of cyclists in Union Square Park.

His crime? Reciting the First Amendment to the Constitution — the one, ironically, that guarantees free speech.

Talen was handcuffed and spent the night in the Tombs after he and his partner, Savitri Durkee, recited the free speech clause during a June 29 gathering of Critical Mass, the monthly gathering of

cyclists that has frequently sparred with police over the right to assemble (also guaranteed by the First Amendment).

"When I got to Union Square, [my partner Durkee] was upset at the presence of NYPD," said Talen, who e-mailed The Paper from Reykjavik, where he is meeting with Icelandic activists.

"They out-numbered the bikers by two to one, and we were lined up militarily with their scooters and paddy-wagons and cruisers up and down the streets and around the square."

"Savitri spotted a circle of police brass and watched them for a while, then went over and started shouting the First Amendment at them."

The pseudo-preacher joined Durkee

with his trademark white burlhorn and proceeded to, in his words, "broadcast their [police] meeting" with his own recitation of the Amendment.

"At one point they asked us to stand 20 feet away, and we complied, but they didn't quite understand how we both have trained voices," he said.

Talen soon made them understand.

Then he was arrested.

"The police do not dispute Talen's version of events (after all, a video of the dispute is available on YouTube), but the NYPD had a different slant on the incident."

"The police moved from their spot where they were conducting a meeting [to avoid the noise]," said Lt. Pete Martin, a department spokesman. "They moved

from three different spots away from him, but he followed them with a megaphone — one of those professional cheerleader megaphones. It was deafening."

The police warned Talen that he could be arrested for harassment, and shortly thereafter, was.

Talen has enlisted First Amendment lawyer Norman Siegel, who contends that the arrest itself was "illegal."

"The elements of harassment in the second degree were not met by Rev. Billy doing what he did in Union Square Park," said Siegel. "Rev. Billy has a First Amendment right to cite the First Amendment."

Siegel will defend Talen during Rev. Billy's appearance in criminal court on Aug. 6.

Slope kids play on the digital sandlot

By Chris Casciaro

for The Brooklyn Paper

Sandlot baseball has finally gone 21st century.

That great ball field tradition of pick-up baseball — which school bullplayers from the days of Babe Ruth has been re-invented in Park Slope with a little help from the Internet.

With organized Little Leagues done for the summer, local parent Dean Bell came up with a way of keeping the

neighborhood's peewee David Wrights and Derek Jeters busy.

"My son couldn't believe the season was over so soon," said Bell. "I made this site so the kids can keep playing through the summer."

All the 5- to 7-year-olds, or their parents, need to do is register on a Web site to receive an e-mail telling them where the hot game will be that day.

Some neighborhood blogs have attacked at the sight, claiming that it kills the classic

style sandlot games where kids meet up on their own.

"This is the way it has to be," said Bell. "These are peewees and their 5, 6, and 7 years old. They're too young to be doing this on their own."

Despite the high-tech approach, the game remains the same to the spirit of pick-up baseball: whoever shows up plays, with the teams divided up at random.

Parents are still advised to stay out of the game and let the kids handle it (except for coaching and

providing the bats and balls).

One major change: positions will be chosen out of a hat — a far cry for the bully-takes-pitcher rule that we remember.

Already, 38 bullplayers have signed up at the Web site, <http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/slope-sandlot>, but on Wednesday afternoon, a would-be participant named Dean was dying to get in a game.

"I came on Friday the 13th," his post read. By Thursday morning, no one had responded.



Play ball! Finally, the Internet is good for something: pick-up games.

HEALTH, MIND & BODY

Emergency care better at LMC

Lutheran Medical Center

Lutheran Medical Center (LMC) has redesigned its Emergency Department, which has reduced wait times, increased patient flow and quality, and improved patient satisfaction.

"This was a massive overhaul of the entire emergency department that started three years ago when we expanded its physical space by nearly 60 percent," says Wendy Z. Goldstein, president and CEO.

"By not only rebuilding, but redefining the emergency response process, we've dramatically reduced overall wait times, and most importantly, set a new standard for emergency care."

Lutheran, like many other N.Y.C. hospitals, has seen steady growth in patient ED visits resulting in ever-increasing wait times. In response, the medical center created a multidisciplinary team to review and revamp the ED process with dramatic results. In fact, the average door to doctor time is under 30 minutes.

"We can't eliminate wait time altogether but we can make the experience for patients a much smoother one," says Claudia Caine, COO. "So far we've added additional staff positions, new computer systems and implemented a Quick Care Program where thousands of patients are seen within only 15 minutes."

Electronic Medical Records and Beside Registration: LMC now uses EmpowerER, the latest computerized information system that electronically tracks ED visits speeding up triage, registration and eliminates paperwork.

With electronic tracking boards, and laptop computers staff can now get important patient information at the bedside quickly and with more comfort to the patient.

The new bedside registration system means patients no longer have to wait in the waiting room before being seen by a nurse or doctor, as is typical in most emergency departments.

Patient Navigation Program: Three full-time staff now serve as liaisons between primary physicians and ED staff. Individuals often arrive at their doctor's office with an illness or injury that requires more serious attention. When this happens, doctors can call LMC's Patient Navigators with critical information, allowing ED staff to prepare in advance for the patient's arrival. Doctors can provide treatment advice, medication information, x-ray and other patient details in real-time.

ED Huddle / Rapid Huddle: A representative from every discipline and patient unit meet in the ED at 11 a.m. each day to plan the day's strategy with the chief operating officer. Together they work to ensure that every patient that needs admission has a bed as quickly as possible.

ED Diplomat Program: Lutheran has created a new program that uses its own senior staff members as ED diplomats. Diplomats complete hourly rounds, speaking to patients and family members to ensure that they are comfortable and receiving all the services they need in a timely fashion.

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It's an Ingmar Bergman time of life

It's that Ingmar Bergman time of life. Smartmom isn't sure what's gotten into her, but for the past few weeks she's been hooked on Ingmar Bergman movies.

Not only is she in a Bergman state of mind, she's in a Bergman time of life. And she doesn't mean pre-menopause. It's just that she wasn't expecting her kids, or herself, to grow up quite so fast. And she certainly wasn't expecting her gradual dosage re-

duction from the antidepressants to make her pine so strongly for sonner, slow-moving films on deep, existential themes.

The Oh So Feisty One's imminent departure for sleep-away camp — and the half-empty nest that it will precipitate — has also prompted Smartmom to consider the meaning of life as a Bergman and spend inordi-



By Louise Crawford

nate amounts of time in her air-conditioned bedroom watching his deep, subtitled DVDs.

The end of the school year probably didn't help Smartmom's mood either. The last couple of weeks have been a real cry-a-thon, what with end-of-year parties, picnics and saying goodbye to friends.

On the morning of the last day of school, Smartmom went into the Community Bookstore, where she ran into a woman she knows from years of drop-offs and pick-ups. She had a forlorn look on her face.

"This isn't your last day at PS 321 is it?" Smartmom asked.

"Yes it is," she said. "I thought you had one more child."

"No, this is it. I get tired just thinking about it," she said. They hugged.

Their interaction had Bergmanesque stillness. She could imagine huge Sven Nyquist close-ups of their sad, tortured faces and the slow choreography of their hug.

Even if you're not seeing the world through Ingmar Bergman glasses, the fact that life seems to be passing at a breakneck speed could get you feeling that way.

When did Smartmom's kids grow up so quickly? The day before yesterday, Teen Spirit was a spunky 2-year-old (and Smartmom has the pictures to prove it) obsessed with the dinosaurs at the Museum of Natural History and his Ocean Alphabet Book. Wasn't he?

And it seems like 10 minutes ago that OSFO was a 10-month-old taking her first steps or jumping off the couch and getting a bloody lip.

How did this happen? More importantly, whose idea was it to fill her Netflix queue with films like "Fanny and Alexander," "Persona," "Scenes from a Marriage," "Cries and Whispers," etc?

Smartmom has only herself (and the passage of time) to blame. The other day, OSFO walked in on Smartmom while she was Bergman-watching.

"Why do you keep renting these French movies?" she asked.

"They're not French," Smartmom answered not taking her eyes off the screen.

"What are they?"

"Swedish..."

OSFO was halfway down the hall before Smartmom even got a chance to explain the difference.

Smartmom actually thought OSFO might enjoy "Fanny and Alexander," Bergman's magical portrait of a Stockholm family that has plenty to celebrate and much to cry about. But it got her sleeping faster than a tab of Benadryl.

The other night, when Hepcat took OSFO to see "Fantasie 4" at the Pavilion, Smartmom indulged in Bergman's early masterpiece, "Persona." Slow, deep, penetrating, there are somber scenes in a mental hospital and carefully composed black and white shots of two women alone on an island their identities beginning to merge.

It was during a neighbor's BPO that Smartmom found herself upstairs watching, "Scenes from a Marriage." Although she could hear the kids playing Double Dutch and making S'mores, Smartmom couldn't drag herself away from Bergman's slow, tatty 1973 television film about a so-called perfect marriage, which slowly unravels on the screen.

By the time Hepcat came upstairs she was ready to kill him or at least have a long, anguished talk about the state of their marriage.

"You know, I feel like you're having an affair with your new iPhone," she felt like telling him. "OK, so I'm not nearly as young, petite, and well designed as that versatile little phone. But doesn't 18 years of marriage mean anything?"

Smartmom is pretty sure he'd rather whisper sweet nothings into her ear than hers.

Finally, the other night Smartmom watched "Cries and Whispers," Bergman's sad, beautiful film about the death of a woman in a large house sur-

rounded by her sisters and an adoring nursemaid. The film has a striking color palette with an emphasis on the color red. When one of the sisters cuts her private parts with a piece of a broken wine glass Smartmom knew she'd had enough.

That's it, Smartmom said aloud to no one.

Smartmom knew it was time to enter her post-Ingmar Bergman phase (quick change the Netflix queue before "Wild Strawberries" and "The Seventh Seal" gets here).

Smartmom was revived: she'd had enough of the meaning of life and it was time to have some fun.

When the film was over, Smartmom packed up the DVD and put it, appropriately enough, in its red velvet bag. She left the apartment and took a life-affirming walk to Sev-

enth Avenue passing more than one neighbor walking their dog. She admired the panics in a neighbor's front garden, eavesdropped on a young couple walking hand in hand, stared up at the moon and into the windows of both Seventh Avenue Books and Park Slope Books.

Smartmom felt her Bergman mood lifting. His filmic art had definitely dovetailed with her own mid-life mania. But she was ready for something a bit more fun.

Enough. It's enough, Smartmom thought as she dropped the envelope in the mailbox at the post office.

Anyone in the mood for "Dumb and Dumber?"

Louise Crawford also produces the site www.knowsbrosky.com, which is not affiliated with The Brooklyn Paper.

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FAMILY CALENDAR

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Compiled by Susan Rosenfield Jay and Harry Chaele

SATURDAY, JULY 14

10 am All-day animal inspired art workshop, dance and story-telling performances at the Prospect Park Zoo (Flatbush Avenue near Ocean Avenue). Call (718) 399-7339 for info or visit <http://myprospectsquad.com>

11 am Kids Shakespeare. A truncated version of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at the Inspiration Playground in Prospect Park (enter at Ocean Avenue between Lincoln and Parkside avenues). Call (646) 222-5008 for info.

12:30 and 2:30 pm Puppet show "Little Red Riding Hood." Puppeteers (128 South Ave., at Fourth Street, in Park Slope). \$7 tickets, \$8 adults. Call (718) 765-3371 to make reservations.

4 and 6 pm Circus and Somenary bairyles told through marionettes (145 Brooklyn Ave. St. Marks Avenue). \$5. Call (718) 735-4400 for info.

1-2 pm Kids art. Exhibition by Brooklyn-based children's book illustrators. Danny Simmons's "Cinderella Goes to the Circus" and, at Lexington Avenue in Cleeves Hill. See Saturday, July 14.

11 am Kids Shakespeare. See Saturday, July 14.

12:30 and 2:30 pm "Little Red Riding Hood." See Saturday, July 14.

4 pm Musical puppet show. Old Stone House (corner of Fifth Avenue and Fourth Street, in Park Slope). free. Call (718) 765-3703 for info or visit www.puppetarts.org

SUNDAY, JULY 15

10 am "Wild Arts Weekend." See Saturday, July 14.

12:30 and 2:30 pm "Little Red Riding Hood." See Saturday, July 14.

4 pm Musical puppet show. Old Stone House (corner of Fifth Avenue and Fourth Street, in Park Slope). free. Call (718) 765-3703 for info or visit www.puppetarts.org

MONDAY, JULY 16

11 am "Theater Book Hunt." Brooklyn Public Library (100 West 4th St., at Duane Street in Red Hook). free. Call (718) 925-0203 for info.

TUESDAY, JULY 17

2 pm Spy school. Brooklyn Public Library (100 West 4th St., at Duane Street in Red Hook). free. Call (718) 925-0203 for info.

2-4 pm Plant workshops. Brooklyn Botanic Garden (1000 Washington Ave., at Montgomery Street). \$8 adults, free for kids 12 and under. Call (718) 623-7200 for info.

7 pm Storytelling. Lenoxdale.

and cookies in the Hoyt Street Garden (corner of Hoyt Street and Atlantic Avenue in Boerum Hill). free. Call (718) 237-0415 for info.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 18

11:30 am Fishing contest. Prospect Park Audubon Center and Boat House (enter at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue). free. Call (718) 765-8999 for info.

2:30 pm Spy school. Brooklyn Public Library (100 West 4th St., at Duane Street in Red Hook). free. Call (718) 925-0203 for info.

THURSDAY, JULY 19

10 am-4 pm Fishing contest. See Wednesday, July 18.

11 am Puppet show at Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park (New Dock Street and the East River). free. Call (718) 832-9664 for info.

1:30-3 pm Zen gardeners workshop. Brooklyn Children's Museum (145 Broadway, at St. Marks Avenue). \$5. Call (718) 735-4400 for info.

2-4 pm Water works. Brooklyn Botanic Garden (1000 Washington Ave., at Montgomery Street). \$8 adults, free for kids 12 and under. Call (718) 623-7200 for info.

FRIDAY, JULY 20

10 am-4 pm Fishing contest. See Thursday, July 19.

10:30 am-4 pm Zoo puppet show. Prospect Park Zoo (450 Flatbush Ave. at Empire Boulevard). free. Call (718) 399-7339 for info.

11 am Puppet show at Empire-Fulton Ferry. See Thursday, July 19.

6 pm "Muppets Take Manhattan." Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park (New Dock Street and the East River). free. Visit www.brooklynkids.org for info.

6:30 pm African music and dance. Brooklyn Botanic Garden (1000 Washington Ave., at Montgomery Street). \$8 adults, free for kids 12 and under. Call (718) 623-7200 for info.

8 pm "Harry Potter" release parties. Bookmark Shoppe (8415 Third Ave., at 84th Street in Rego). Call (718) 833-5115 for info; Barnes and Noble (267 Seventh Ave., at 26th Street, in Park Slope). free. Call (718) 832-9664 for info.

SATURDAY, JULY 21

10 am-4 pm Mary's annual fishing contest. See Thursday, July 19.

10:30 am-4 pm Zoo puppet show. See Friday, July 20.

11 am Kids Shakespeare. See Saturday, July 14.

1-4 pm String workshop for ages 5 to 10. Camp Tuckahery (100 Underhill Ave., between Sterling Place and St. Johns Avenue). \$50. Call (845) 797-1320 to register.

2-4 pm Storytelling for toddlers. Brooklyn Botanic Garden (1000 Washington Ave., at Montgomery Street). \$8 adults, free for kids 12 and under. Call (718) 623-7200 for info.

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verses & reverses

by LEON FREILICH

"The Sidewalks of Park Slope"

North Slope, South Slope
All around the 'hood,
It's masses pushing strollers
Built for two tots, wide in scope.
Room for them aplenty,
But no room for the rest,
They belong somewhere else,
not on

The sidewalks of Park Slope.
South Slope, North Slope
All around the 'hood,
The gutter is no better,
Choked with cars, weighed down
in this instant classic:

Inspired by the spate of articles about life in Park Slope, Leon Freilich, the neighborhood poet laureate, weighed in with this instant classic:

The sidewalks of Park Slope.
South Slope, North Slope
All around the 'hood,
The gutter is no better,
Choked with cars, weighed down
in this instant classic:

WITNESS TO HISTORY

I am the Frankster

By The Frankster
for The Brooklyn Paper

The Fourth of July. Independence Day. A time when Americans celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence with parades and picnics, fireworks and franks. As a patriotic American, I practice what I preach. Accordingly, I didn't just eat a hot dog on July 4th. I was a hot dog. Or more accurately, a Frankster.

That's right, on our nation's 231st birthday, I was Nathan's Frankster at the 90th annual hot dog-eating contest at Coney Island. Why me? Well it turns out the long-serving Frankster — let's call her Julie Rosenberg — got pregnant. Now, I know Rosenberg was up to the rigors of the job, but there's no way contest sponsors were going to let a pregnant woman remind the public of the potential teratogenic effects of hot dog nitrates (never proven, by the way). But the fates of immortality decreed it I would be the Frankster during Rosenberg's sauerkraut substation.

We all know what happened: Joey "Taws" Chestnut ingested 66 of my beefy fellow franks and made history. I'll leave the description of the actual competition to the sportswriters, cultural pundits and cardiologists. Instead, I will focus on the perspective from inside the bun.

To begin with, I had some concerns. Knowing that I would need to stay hydrated with gallons of Diet Coke (available in various sizes at Nathan's), I considered wearing an adult diaper. But when I remembered that story about the NASA astronaut who apparently drove hundreds of miles to kidnapkill a rival girlfriend. The next day, the only thing anyone was talking about was the fact she apparently wore an adult diaper to avoid having to make a pit stop. So I decided that this hot dog would hold it in, thus serving as a role model to my 3-year-old niece and all the other cocktail waiters out there.

It turns out urination was not a burning issue. I can get stiffing but I sit side while prior Franksters call "the bun in the sun." And even though July 4 was relatively cool, I still perspired so much that my bun was soggy than Takeru Kobayashi's bun-covered T-shirt after the contest. Urination was the last thing I was thinking about.

Of course, the most important thing a Frankster does is sit with his own vomit. Prior Franksters have been good, but I felt that I had my own interpretation of what a hot dog should be honed through years of eating at Nathan's (many convenient locations). Now I know it all looks freeseeking up there, but there are rules governing what a Frankster can and cannot do: the Frankster does not talk, and cannot make gas signals or obscene gestures. So I focused on a lot of dancing, classic mime theater (the Frankster stuck in a box), air guitar and shadow-boxing. I was a physical Frankster: at the weigh-in at City Hall on July 3, I even begged the mayor (now that photo could hurt a presidential candidate, but I swear, it was strictly platonic).

Most important: never interfere with the competitors during the contest. I may be a patriotic American hot dog, but I had too much respect for six-time winner Kobayashi to give Chestnut an advantage (besides, anyone who can eat 17-1/2 pounds of pan-seared cow-brains in 15 minutes is a gentleman, a scholar and an athlete). In addition, I was a little concerned to be dressed as a hot dog and get too close to men and women who are furiously eating — anyone who can eat 5-1/2 pounds of buffet food in 15 minutes (Crazy Legs Conti) can't be that discerning (and I'm not even going to get into the dangers of standing too close to someone who is the baked-bean eating champion of the world (9-4 pounds in 2 minutes 47 seconds, Syma Thomas).

Much of my job involved interacting with the public. I now know that young children, and some of the elderly, are frightened of the Frankster. Despite rumors that one Russian mobster had a contract out on the Frankster due to some unfortunate wagers on last year's contest, I was unharmed. Most people love the Frankster, though there was a Boy Scout who asked, "Dude, have you lost all self-respect?" (Does he get a demerit for that?)

But my only moment of true self-doubt was July 5, when the Nathan's team rang the opening bell at NASDAQ and I went outside to pace the sidewalks of Times Square. The Frankster was out of context. It is amazing how many New Yorkers will refuse to make eye contact with a six-foot-tall hot dog.

I was also a little concerned with the man who came up to shake my hand, the spent the next 25 minutes five feet away looking at me and talking to himself. And I'm not even going to repeat some of the flimsy construction workers across the street were yelling at me.

I may be all beef, but those guys are pigs.

No 'brains' for Chesnut



Hot dog-eating champion Joey Chestnut basks in Old Glory.

The Brooklyn Paper

One day after his stunning July 4 victory over six-time world hot dog-eating champion Takeru Kobayashi, Joey Chestnut put to rest persistent rumors that he would now target what many believe is competitive eating's true Holy Grail: Kobayashi's cow-brain-eating record.

Many longtime observers of the sport — among them, this reporter — were convinced that winning the Mustard-Yellow International Belt would not satisfy Chestnut's voracious youth and that he would need to cleave further into Kobayashi's territory by eating more than 17.7 pounds of pan-seared cow brains in 15 minutes, a record that most people think can never be broken.

Chestnut is not even going to try.

"That's not for me," he told The Brooklyn Paper exclusively. "There are a lot of foods in this sport that I don't want to eat because it would take the fun out of it for me. I once did a jalapeno contest and I really regretted it. So, no. No cow brains for me."

Kobayashi had no comment on the apparent invulnerability of his transcendent record, but reflected on Chestnut's status as an eating legend after the American challenger ate a world record 66 hot dogs and buns at the Nathan's contest on the Fourth of July in Coney Island.

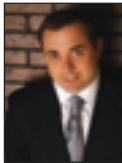
"Joey is a great champion," said Kobayashi, who, despite a severe case of jawrthritis, ate 63 HDBs to finish second. "But I will return next year and I will beat him."

— Kurtzman

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